851

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

A POEM.

IN SIX CANTOS.

Serfojee Rajah. 1829

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

851

A POEM.

BY

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

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1810.

851

TO

THE MOST NOBLE

JOHN JAMES,

MARQUIS OF ABERCORN,

&c. &c. &c.

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ARGUMENT.

The Scene of the following Poem is laid chiefly in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine, in the Western Highlands of Perthshire. The Time of Action includes Six Days, and the transactions of each day occupy a Canto.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIRST

The Chase.

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THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIRST.

The Chase.

HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
  On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
  Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
  O minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
  Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?

Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burthen of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's matchless eye.

O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,
And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touched in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I.

The Stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouthed blood-hound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II.

As chief who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"

The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Tossed his beamed frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
A moment snuffed the tainted gale,
A moment listen'd to the cry,
That thickened as the chace drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appeared,
With one brave bound the copse he cleared,
And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III.

Yelled on the view the opening pack,
Rock glen and cavern paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awakened mountain gave response.

An hundred dogs bayed deep and strong,
Clattered an hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
An hundred voices joined the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cowered the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Returned from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
On the lone wood and mighty hill.

IV.

Less loud the sounds of sylvan war
Disturbed the heights of Uam-Var,

And roused the cavern, where 'tis told
A giant made his den of old;
For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his path-way hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stayed per-force,
Was fain to breathe his faultering horse;
And of the trackers of the deer
Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly, on the mountain side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V.

The noble Stag was pausing now,
Upon the mountain's southern brow,
Where broad extended, far beneath,
The varied realms of fair Menteith.
With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
And pondered refuge from his toil,
By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.

But nearer was the copse-wood gray,
That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
And mingled with the pine-trees blue
On the bold cliffs of Ben-venue.
Fresh vigour with the hope returned,
With flying foot the heath he spurned,
Held westward with unwearied race,
And left behind the panting chase.

VI.

'Twere long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
As swept the hunt through Cambus-more;
What reins were tightened in despair,
When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
Who flagged upon Bochastle's heath,
Who shunned to stem the flooded Teith,—
For twice, that day, from shore to shore,
The gallant Stag swam stoutly o'er.
Few were the stragglers, following far,
That reached the lake of Vennachar;

And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
The headmost Horseman rode alone.

VII.

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
That horseman plied the scourge and steel;
For, jaded now, and spent with toil,
Embossed with foam, and dark with soil,
While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring Stag strained full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatched for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toiled the blood-hounds staunch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the precipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII.

The hunter marked that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deemed the Stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barred the way;
Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound, and death-halloo,
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew;
But thundering as he came prepared,
With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunned the shock,
And turned him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and hunter's ken,
In the deep Trosach's wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There while, close couched, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild flowers on his head,

He heard the baffled dogs in vain
Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yelled again.

IX.

Close on the hounds the hunter came,
To cheer them on the vanished game;
But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
The gallant horse exhausted fell.
The impatient rider strove in vain
To rouse him with the spur and rein,
For the good steed, his labours o'er,
Stretched his stiff limbs to rise no more;
Then, touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse.
" I little thought, when first thy rein
I slacked upon the banks of Seine,
That highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"—

X.

Then through the dell his horn resounds,
From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
Back limped, with slow and crippled pace,
The sulky leaders of the chase;
Close to their master's side they pressed,
With drooping tail and humbled crest;
But still the dingle's hollow throat
Prolonged the swelling bugle-note.
The owlets started from their dream,
The eagles answered with their scream,
Round and around the sounds were cast,
Till echo seemed an answering blast;
And on the hunter hied his way,
To join some comrades of the day;
Yet often paused, so strange the road,
So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.

XI.

The western waves of ebbing day
Rolled o'er the glen their level way ;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path, in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
Its thunder-splintered pinnacle ;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,

Wild crests as pagod ever decked,
Or mosque of eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair;
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The briar-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs, of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII.

Boon nature scattered, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalmed the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
The primrose pale, and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;
Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,

Grouped their dark hues with every stain,
The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
And higher yet the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seemed the cliffs to meet on high,
His boughs athwart the narrowed sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
Where glistening streamers waved and danced,
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII.

Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet still and deep,

Affording scarce such breadth of brim,
As served the wild-duck's brood to swim;
Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the hunter stray'd,
Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seemed to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
Yet broader floods extending still,
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV.

And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,

Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath him rolled;
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light;
And mountains, that like giants stand,
To centinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crags, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurled,
The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feathered o'er
His ruined sides and summit hoar,

While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV.

From the steep promontory gazed
The Stranger, raptured and amazed.
And, " What a scene were here," he cried,
" For princely pomp or churchman's pride !
On this bold brow, a lordly tower ;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower ;
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister grey.
How blithely might the bugle-horn
Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn !
How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
Chime, when the groves were still and mute !
And, when the midnight moon should lave
Her forehead in the silver wave,
How solemn on the ear would come
The holy matin's distant hum,

While the deep peal's commanding tone
Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
A sainted hermit from his cell,
To drop a bead with every knell—
And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
Should each bewildered stranger call
To friendly feast, and lighted hall.

XVI.

"Blithe were it then to wander here!
But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
The copse must give my evening fare;
Some mossy bank my couch must be,
Some rustling oak my canopy.
Yet pass we that;—the war and chase
Give little choice of resting-place;—
A summer night, in green-wood spent,
Were but to-morrow's merriment;
But hosts may in these wilds abound,
Such as are better missed than found;

To meet with highland plunderers here
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
I am alone;—my bugle strain
May call some straggler of the train;
Or, fall the worst that may betide,
Ere now this faulchion has been tried."—

XVII.

But scarce again his horn he wound,
When lo! forth starting at the sound,
From underneath an aged oak,
That slanted from the islet rock,
A Damsel guider of its way,
A little skiff shot to the bay,
That round the promontory steep
Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
The weeping willow twig to lave,
And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
The beach of pebbles bright as snow.

The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
Just as the Hunter left his stand,
And stood concealed amid the brake,
To view this Lady of the Lake.
The maiden paused, as if again
She thought to catch the distant strain.
With head up-raised, and look intent,
And eye and ear attentive bent,
And locks flung back, and lips apart,
Like monument of Grecian art,
In listening mood, she seemed to stand
The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII.

And ne'er did Grecian chizzel trace
A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
Of finer form, or lovelier face!
What though the sun, with ardent frown,
Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
The sportive toil, which, short and light,
Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,

Served too in hastier swell to show
Short glimpses of a breast of snow:
What though no rule of courtly grace
To measured mood had trained her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight hare-bell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The list'ner held his breath to hear.

XIX.

A chieftain's daughter seemed the maid;
Her sattin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betray'd.
And seldom was a snood amid
Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;

And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye ;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confessed
The guileless movements of her breast ;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claimed a sigh,
Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion poured a prayer,
Or tale of injury called forth
The indignant spirit of the north.
One only passion, unrevealed,
With maiden pride the maid concealed,
Yet not less purely felt the flame ;—
O need I tell that passion's name !

XX.

Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne :—
" Father !" she cried ; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
A while she paused, no answer came,—
" Malcolm, was thine the blast ?" the name
Less resolutely uttered fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
" A stranger I," the Huntsman said,
Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid alarmed, with hasty oar,
Pushed her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gained between,
Closer she drew her bosom's screen ;
(So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing,)
Then safe, though fluttered and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.

Not his the form, nor his the eye,
That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI.

On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
Yet had not quenched the open truth,
And fiery vehemence of youth ;
Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
For hardy sports, or contest bold ;
And though in peaceful garb arrayed,
And weaponless, except his blade,
His stately mien, as well implied
A high-born heart, a martial pride,
As if a baron's crest he wore,
And sheathed in armour trod the shore.

Slighting the petty need he showed,
He told of his benighted road;
His ready speech flowed fair and free,
In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
Yet seemed that tone, and gesture bland,
Less used to sue than to command.

XXII.

A while the maid the Stranger eyed,
And, reassured, at last replied,
That highland halls were open still
To wildered wanderers of the hill.
"Nor think you unexpected come
To yon lone isle, our desert home;
Before the heath had lost the dew,
This morn, a couch was pulled for you;
On yonder mountain's purple head
Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
And our broad nets have swept the mere,
To furnish forth your evening cheer."—

" Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
Your courtesy has erred," he said;
" No right have I to claim, misplaced,
The welcome of expected guest.
A wanderer here, by fortune tost,
My way, my friends, my courser lost,
I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
Have ever drawn your mountain air,
Till on this lake's romantic strand,
I found a fay in fairy land."—

XXIII.

" I well believe," the maid replied,
As her light skiff approached the side,
" I well believe, that ne'er before
Your foot has trod Loch-Katrine's shore;
But yet, as far as yesternight,
Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
A grey-haired sire, whose eye intent
Was on the visioned future bent.

He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
Painted exact your form and mien,
Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt,
That faulchion's crooked blade and hilt,
That cap with heron's plumage trim,
And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
He bade that all should ready be,
To grace a guest of fair degree;
But light I held his prophecy,
And deemed it was my father's horn,
Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."—

XXIV.

The Stranger smiled:—"Since to your home,
A destined errant knight I come,
Announced by prophet sooth and old,
Doomed, doubtless, for achievement bold,
I'll lightly front each high emprize,
For one kind glance of those bright eyes;

Permit me, first, the task to guide
Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."—
The maid, with smile suppressed and sly,
The toil unwonted saw him try;
For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
His noble hand had grasped an oar:
Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
And o'er the lake the shallop flew;
With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The darkening mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV.

The Stranger viewed the shore around;
'Twas all so close with copse-wood bound,
Nor track nor path-way might declare
That human foot frequented there,

Until the mountain-maiden showed
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And opened on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
With their long fibres swept the ground;
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

XXVI.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
Lopped of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
To fence each crevice from the wind.

The lighter pine-trees, over-head,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And withered heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.
Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favoured flower,
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower,
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch-Katrine's keen and searching air.
An instant in this porch she staid,
And gaily to the Stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"—

XXVII.

"My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."—
He crossed the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
To his bold brow his spirit rushed,
But soon for vain alarm he blushed,
When on the floor he saw displayed,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropped from the sheath, that careless flung
Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting spear,
And broad-swords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusked trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide

The frontlet of the elk adorns,
Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stained,
That blackening streaks of blood retained,
And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
With otter's fur and seal's unite,
In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
To garnish forth the sylvan hall.

XXVIII.

The wondering Stranger round him gazed,
And next the fallen weapon raised;—
Few were the arms whose sinewy strength
Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
And as the brand he poised and swayed,
"I never knew but one," he said,
"Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
A blade like this in battle field."—
She sighed, then smiled and took the word;
"You see the guardian champion's sword:

As light it trembles in his hand,
As in my grasp a hazel wand;
My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus, or Ascabart;
But in the absent giant's hold
Are women now, and menials old."—

XXIX.

The mistress of the mansion came,
Mature of age, a graceful dame;
Whose easy step and stately port
Had well become a princely court,
To whom, though more than kindred knew,
Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
Meet welcome to her guest she made,
And every courteous rite was paid,
That hospitality could claim,
Though all unasked his birth and name.
Such then the reverence to a guest,
That fellest foe might join the feast,

And from his deadliest foeman's door
Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.
At length his rank the Stranger names,
" The knight of Snowdoun, James Fitz-James ;
Lord of a barren heritage,
Which his brave sires, from age to age,
By their good swords had held with toil ;
His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
And he, God wot, was forced to stand
Oft for his right with blade in hand.
This morning with Lord Moray's train
He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
Out-stripped his comrades, missed the deer,
Lost his good steed, and wandered here."—

XXX.

Fain would the Knight in turn require
The name and state of Ellen's sire ;
Well shewed the elder lady's mien,
That courts and cities she had seen ;

Ellen, though more her looks displayed
The simple grace of sylvan maid,
In speech and gesture, form and face,
Shewed she was come of gentle race;
'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
Each hint the Knight of Snowdoun gave,
Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
Or Ellen, innocently gay,
Turned all inquiry light away:—
" Wierd women we! by dale and down,
We dwell afar from tower and town.
We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
On wandering knights our spells we cast;
While viewless minstrels touch the string,
'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."—
She sung, and still a harp unseen
Filled up the symphony between.

XXXI.

Song.

" Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
  Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking;
Dream of battled fields no more,
  Days of danger, nights of waking.
In our isle's enchanted hall,
  Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
Fairy strains of music fall,
  Every sense in slumber dewing.
Soldier, rest! thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more;
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

" No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
  Armour's clang, or war-steed champing,
Trump nor pibroch summon here
  Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.

Yet the lark's shrill fife may come
  At the day-break from the fallow,
And the bittern sound his drum,
  Booming from the sedgy shallow.
Ruder sounds shall none be near,
Guards nor warders challenge here,
Here's no war-steed's neigh and champing,
Shouting clans or squadrons stamping."—

XXXII.

She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
To grace the stranger of the day;
Her mellow notes awhile prolong
The cadence of the flowing song,
Till to her lips in measured frame
The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

Song continued.

"Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
  While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
Dream not, with the rising sun,
  Bugles here shall sound reveillie.

Sleep! the deer is in his den;
  Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,
  How thy gallant steed lay dying.
Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
Think not of the rising sun,
For at dawning to assail ye,
Here no bugles sound reveillie."—

XXXIII.

The hall was cleared—the Stranger's bed
Was there of mountain heather spread,
Where oft an hundred guests had lain,
And dreamed their forest sports again.
But vainly did the heath-flower shed
Its moorland fragrance round his head;
Not Ellen's spell had lulled to rest
The fever of his troubled breast.
In broken dreams the image rose
Of varied perils, pains, and woes;

His steed now flounders in the brake,
Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
Now leader of a broken host,
His standard falls, his honour's lost.
Then,—from my couch may heavenly might
Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
Again returned the scenes of youth,
Of confident undoubting truth;
Again his soul he interchanged
With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
They come, in dim procession led,
The cold, the faithless, and the dead;
As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
As if they parted yesterday.
And doubt distracts him at the view,
O were his senses false or true!
Dreamed he of death, or broken vow,
Or is it all a vision now!

XXXIV.

At length, with Ellen in a grove,
He seemed to walk, and speak of love ;
She listened with a blush and sigh,
His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
And a cold gauntlet met his grasp :
The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
Upon its head a helmet shone ;
Slowly enlarged to giant size,
With darkened cheek and threatening eyes,
The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
He woke, and, panting with affright,
Recalled the vision of the night.
The hearth's decaying brands were red,
And deep and dusky lustre shed,
Half shewing, half concealing all
The uncouth trophies of the hall.

Mid those the Stranger fixed his eye
Where that huge faulchion hung on high,
And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
Rushed, chasing countless thoughts along,
Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
He rose, and sought the moon-shine pure.

XXXV.

The wild rose, eglantine, and broom,
Wasted around their rich perfume;
The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,
The aspens slept beneath the calm;
The silver light, with quivering glance,
Played on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
While thus he communed with his breast:
" Why is it at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?

Can I not mountain maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
Can I not view a highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fevered dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?—
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
Not even in sleep is will resigned.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more."—
His midnight orison he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
Consigned to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturbed repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawned on Benvenue.

END OF CANTO FIRST.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO SECOND.

The Island.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO SECOND.

The Island.

I.

AT morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
All Nature's children feel the matin spring
Of life reviving, with reviving day;
And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
Wafting the stranger on his way again,
Morn's genial influence roused a Minstrel grey,
And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-haired Allan-bane!

II.

Song.

" Not faster yonder rowers' might
  Flings from their oars the spray,
Not faster yonder rippling bright,
That tracks the shallop's course in light,
  Melts in the lake away,
Than men from memory erase
The benefits of former days ;
Then, Stranger, go ! good speed the while,
Nor think again of the lonely isle.

" High place to thee in royal court,
  High place in battled line,
Good hawk and hound for sylvan sport,
Where Beauty sees the brave resort,
  The honoured meed be thine !
True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
Thy lady constant, kind and dear,

And lost in love's and friendship's smile,
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III.

Song continued.

" But if beneath yon southern sky
  A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
  Pine for his highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap ere while
A stranger in the lonely isle.

" Or if on life's uncertain main
  Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
  Beneath the fickle gale;

Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle."—

IV.

As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reached the main-land side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The Stranger cast a lingering look,
Where easily his eye might reach
The harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.
His hand, reclined upon the wire,
Seemed watching the awakening fire;

So still he sate, as those who wait
Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
So still, as if no breeze might dare
To lift one lock of hoary hair;
So still, as life itself were fled,
In the last sound his harp had sped.

V.

Upon a rock with lichens wild,
Beside him Helen sate and smiled.
Smiled she to see the stately drake
Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
While her vexed spaniel, from the beach,
Bayed at the prize beyond his reach?
Yet tell me then the maid who knows,
Why deepened on her cheek the rose?—
Forgive, forgive, fidelity!
Perchance the maiden smiled to see
Yon parting lingerer wave adieu,
And stop and turn to wave anew;

And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
Shew me the fair would scorn to spy,
And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI.

While yet he loitered on the spot,
It seemed as Ellen marked him not;
But when he turned him to the glade,
One courteous parting sign she made;
And after, oft the knight would say,
That not when prize of festal day
Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,
So highly did his bosom swell,
As at that simple mute farewell.
Now with a trusty mountain guide,
And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
Watched him wind slowly round the hill;

But when his stately form was hid,
The guardian in her bosom chid—
" Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!"
'Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,
" Not so had Malcolm idly hung
On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
Not so had Malcolm strained his eye
Another step than thine to spy—
" Wake, Allan-bane," aloud she cried,
To the old Minstrel by her side,
" Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
I'll give thy harp heroic theme,
And warm thee with a noble name;
Pour forth the glory of the Græme."—
Scarce from her lip the word had rushed,
When deep the conscious maiden blushed;
For of his clan, in hall and bower,
Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII.

The Minstrel waked his harp—three times
Arose the well-known martial chimes,
And thrice their high heroic pride
In melancholy murmurs died.
—"Vainly thou bidst, O noble maid,"
Clasping his withered hands, he said,
"Vainly thou bidst me wake the strain,
Though all unwont to bid in vain.
Alas! than mine a mightier hand
Has tuned my harp, my strings has spanned!
I touch the chords of joy, but low
And mournful answer notes of woe;
And the proud march which victors tread,
Sinks in the wailing for the dead.—
O well for me, if mine alone
That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
If, as my tuneful fathers said,
This harp, which erst Saint Modan swayed,

Can thus its master's fate foretel,
Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII.

" But ah! dear lady, thus it sighed
The eve thy sainted mother died;
And such the sounds which, while I strove
To wake a lay of war or love,
Came marring all the festal mirth,
Appalling me who gave them birth,
And, disobedient to my call,
Wailed loud through Bothwell's bannered hall,
Ere Douglasses to ruin driven,
Were exiled from their native heaven.—
Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe
My master's house must undergo,
Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
Brood in these accents of despair,
No future bard, sad harp! shall fling
Triumph or rapture from thy string;

One short, one final strain shall flow,
Fraught with unutterable woe,
Then shivered shall thy fragments lie,
Thy master cast him down and die."—

IX.

Soothing she answered him, " Assuage,
Mine honoured friend, the fears of age ;
All melodies to thee are known,
That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,
In lowland vale or highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
The war-march with the funeral song ?—
Small ground is now for boding fear ;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,

Not then to fortune more resigned,
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stooped, and, looking round,
Plucked a blue hare-bell from the ground,
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the King's own garden grows,
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."—
Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreathed in her dark locks, and smiled.

X.

Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old harper's mood away.

With such a look as hermits throw
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
" Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours thou hast lost!
O might I live to see thee grace,
In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
To see my favourite's step advance,
The lightest in the courtly dance,
The cause of every gallant's sigh,
And leading star of every eye,
And theme of every minstrel's art,
The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!" *—

XI.

" Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
(Light was her accent, yet she sighed,)
" Yet is this mossy rock to me
Worth splendid chair and canopy;

* The well-known cognizance of the Douglas family.

Nor would my footstep spring more gay
In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
To royal minstrel's lay as thine;
And then for suitors proud and high,
To bend before my conquering eye,
Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
The terror of Lochlomond's side,
Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII.

The ancient bard his glee repressed;
"Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
For who, through all this western wild,
Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
Courtiers give place before the stride
Of the undaunted homicide;

And since, though outlawed, hath his hand
Full sternly kept his mountain land.
Who else dared give,—ah ! woe the day,
That I such hated truth should say—
The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer,
Even the rude refuge we have here ?
Alas, this wild marauding chief
Alone might hazard our relief,
And now thy maiden charms expand,
Looks for his guerdon in thy hand ;
Full soon may dispensation sought,
To back his suit from Rome be brought.
Then, though an exile on the hill,
Thy father, as the Douglas, still
Be held in reverence and fear ;
And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread ;
Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain !
Thy hand is on a lion's mane."—

XIII.

" Minstrel," the maid replied, and high
Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
" My debts to Roderick's house I know:
All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
Since first an orphan in the wild
She sorrowed o'er her sister's child;
To her brave chieftain son, from ire
Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
A deeper, holier debt is owed;
And, could I pay it with my blood,
Allan! Sir Roderick should command
My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
A vot'ress in Maronnan's cell;
Rather through realms beyond the sea,
Seeking the world's cold charity,
Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,

An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV.

"Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses gray—
That pleading look, what can it say
But what I own?—I grant him brave,
But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
And generous—save vindictive mood,
Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
I grant him true to friendly band,
As his claymore is to his hand;
But O! that very blade of steel
More mercy for a foe would feel:
I grant him liberal, to fling
Among his clan the wealth they bring,
When back by lake and glen they wind,
And in the Lowland leave behind,
Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
A mass of ashes slaked with blood.

The hand that for my father fought,
I honour, as his daughter ought;
But can I clasp it reeking red,
From peasants slaughtered in their shed?
No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
They make his passions darker seem,
And flash along his spirit high,
Like lightning o'er the midnight sky.
While yet a child,—and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
I shuddered at his brow of gloom,
His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
A maiden grown, I ill could bear
His haughty mien and lordly air;
But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
To change such odious theme were best,—
What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"—

XV.

" What think I of him ?—woe the while
That brought such wanderer to our isle !
Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
What time he leagued, no longer foes,
His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
Did, self-unscabbarded, fore-show
The footstep of a secret foe.
If courtly spy, and harboured here,
What may we for the Douglas fear ?
What for this island, deemed of old
Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold !
If neither spy nor foe, I pray
What yet may jealous Roderick say ?
—Nay, wave not thy disdainful head !
Bethink thee of the discord dread,
That kindled when at Beltane game
Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Græme;

Still, though thy sire the peace renewed,
Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
My dull ears catch no faultering breeze,
No weeping birch, nor aspens wake,
Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
Still is the canna's * hoary beard,
Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
And hark again! some pipe of war
Sends the bold pibroch from afar."—

XVI.

Far up the lengthened lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four manned and masted barges grew,
And bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steered full upon the lonely isle;

* Cotton-grass.

The point of Brianchoil they passed,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
The bold Sir Roderick's bannered pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave;
Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanters * down, and sweep
The furrowed bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient highland strain.

* The drone of the bag-pipe.

XVII.

Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellowed along the waters came,
And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wailed every harsher note away;
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
Of old Clan-Alpine to the fight.
Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And, hurrying at the signal dread,
The battered earth returns their tread.
Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Expressed their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled out-cry, shrieks, and blows;

And mimic din of stroke and ward,
As broad-sword upon target jarred;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yelled amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow,
Sunk in a moan prolonged and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII.

The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
While loud a hundred clans-men raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.

Each boat-man, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burthen bore,
In such wild cadence, as the breeze
Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"
And near, and nearer as they rowed,
Distinct the martial ditty flowed.

XIX.

Boat Song.

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances !
  Honoured and blessed be the ever-green Pine !
Long may the Tree in his banner that glances,
  Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line !
    Heaven send it happy dew,
    Earth lend it sap anew,
  Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
    While every highland glen
    Sends our shout back agen,
  " Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,
Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XX.

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Banochar's groans to our slogan replied;
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,

Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!
O! that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
" Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XXI.

With all her joyful female band,
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw,

As echoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?"—
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obeyed,
And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! From main-land cast,
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
And waft him from the mountain side."—
Then, like a sun-beam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scanned,
For her dear form, his mother's band,

The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII.

Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'Tis that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
His darling Ellen closely pressed,
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
Though 'twas an hero's eye that weep'd.
Nor while on Ellen's faultering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
Marked she, that fear, (affection's proof,)
Still held a graceful youth aloof;

No ! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII.

Allan, with wistful look the while,
Marked Roderick landing on the isle ;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the chieftain's pride,
Then dashed, with hasty hand, away
From his dimmed eye the gathering spray ;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
" Can'st thou, young friend, no meaning spy
In my poor follower's glistening eye ?
I'll tell thee :—he recalls the day,
When in my praise he led the lay
O'er the arched gate of Bothwell proud,
While many a minstrel answered loud,
When Percy's Norman pennon, won
In bloody field, before me shone,

And twice ten knights, the least a name
As mighty as yon chief may claim,
Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
Was I of all that marshalled crowd,
Though the waned crescent owned my might,
And in my train trooped lord and knight,
Though Blantyre hymned her holiest lays,
And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
As when this old man's silent tear,
And this poor maid's affection dear,
A welcome give more kind and true,
Than aught my better fortunes knew.
Forgive, my friend, a father's boast;
O! it out-beggars all I lost!"—

XXIV.

Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
The bashful maiden's cheek appeared,
For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.

The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
The loved caresses of the maid
The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
And, at her whistle, on her hand
The falcon took his favourite stand,
Closed his dark wing, relaxed his eye,
Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
Like fabled Goddess of the Wood,
That if a father's partial thought
O'erweighed her worth and beauty aught,
Well might the lover's judgment fail
To balance with a juster scale;
For with each secret glance he stole,
The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV.

Of stature fair, and slender frame,
But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.

The belted plaid and tartan hose
Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
Curled closely round his bonnet blue.
Trained to the chase, his eagle eye
The ptarmigan in snow could spy;
Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
And scarce that doe, though winged with fear,
Out-stripped in speed the mountaineer;
Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
And not a sob his toil confess.
His form accorded with a mind
Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
A blither heart, till Ellen came,
Did never love nor sorrow tame;
It danced as lightsome in his breast,
As played the feather on his crest.

Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
And bards, who saw his features bold,
When kindled by the tales of old,
Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI.

Now back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late returned? And why"—
The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
'Tis mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
I met young Malcolm as I strayed
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,

Nor strayed I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scoured the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
Risqued life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."—

XXVII.

Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Reddened at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Failed aught in hospitality.
In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,

Whose moody aspect soon declared,
That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thoughts seemed toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,
And Ellen, too; then cast around
His eyes, then fixed them on the ground,
As studying phrase that might avail
Best to convey unpleasant tale.
Long with his dagger's hilt he played,
Then raised his haughty brow, and said:

XXVIII.

"Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
Kinsman and father,—if such name
Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
Mine honoured mother; Ellen—why,
My cousin, turn away thine eye?—

And Græme; in whom I hope to know
Full soon a noble friend or foe,
When age shall give thee thy command,
And leading in thy native land,—
List all!—The King's vindictive pride
Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
Where chiefs, with hound and hawk who came
To share their monarch's sylvan game,
Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
And when the banquet they prepared,
And wide their loyal portals flung,
O'er their own gate-way struggling hung.
Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
Where the lone streams of Ettricke glide,
And from the silver Teviot's side;
The dales, where martial clans did ride,
Are now one sheep-walk waste and wide.
This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
So faithless, and so ruthless known,

Now hither comes; his end the same,
The same pretext of sylvan game.
What grace for Highland chiefs judge ye,
By fate of Border chivalry.
Yet more; amid Glenfinlas green,
Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
This by espial sure I know:
Your counsel in the streight I show."—

XXIX.

Ellen and Margaret fearfully
Sought comfort in each other's eye,
Then turned their ghastly look, each one,
This to her sire, that to her son.
The hasty colour went and came
In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme;
But from his glance it well appeared,
'Twas but for Ellen that he feared;
While sorrowful, but undismay'd,
The Douglas thus his counsel said:

"Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
It may but thunder and pass o'er;
Nor will I here remain an hour,
To draw the lightning on thy bower;
For well thou know'st, at this grey head
The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
For thee, who, at thy King's command,
Canst aid him with a gallant band,
Submission, homage, humbled pride,
Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside.
Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
Ellen and I will seek, apart,
The refuge of some forest cell;
There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
Till on the mountain and the moor,
The stern pursuit be passed and o'er."—

XXX.

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
"So help me heaven, and my good blade!

No, never! Blasted be yon pine,
My father's ancient crest, and mine,
If from its shade in danger part
The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
Hear my blunt speech: grant me this maid
To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
Will friends and allies flock enow;
Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
Will bind to us each Western Chief.
When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
And when I light the nuptial torch,
A thousand villages in flames,
Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
—Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
I meant not all my heat might say.—
Small need of inroad, or of fight,
When the sage Douglas may unite

Each mountain clan in friendly band,
To guard the passes of their land,
Till the foiled King, from pathless glen,
Shall bootless turn him home agen."—

XXXI.

There are who have, at midnight hour,
In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
And, on the verge that beetled o'er
The ocean-tide's incessant roar,
Dreamed calmly out their dangerous dream,
Till wakened by the morning beam;
When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
Such startler cast his glance below,
And saw unmeasured depth around,
And heard unintermitted sound,
And thought the battled fence so frail,
It waved like cobweb in the gale;—
Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
Did he not desperate impulse feel,

Headlong to plunge himself below,
And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
As sudden ruin yawned around,
By crossing terrors wildly tossed,
Still for the Douglas fearing most,
Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII.

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
And eager rose to speak—but ere
His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
Had Douglas marked the hectic strife,
Where death seemed combating with life;
For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
One instant rushed the throbbing blood,
Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
Left its domain as wan as clay.

"Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
"My daughter cannot be thy bride;
Not that the blush to wooer dear,
Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
Nor hazard aught for our relief.
Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
Will level a rebellious spear.
'Twas I that taught his youthful hand
To rein a steed and wield a brand;
I see him yet, the princely boy!
Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
I love him still, despite my wrongs,
By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
O seek the grace you well may find,
Without a cause to mine combined."——

XXXIII.

Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
The waving of his tartans broad,

And darkened brow, where wounded pride
With ire and disappointment vied,
Seemed, by the torch's gloomy light,
Like the ill Dæmon of the night,
Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
Upon the nighted pilgrim's way:
But, unrequited Love! thy dart
Plunged deepest its envenomed smart,
And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
While eyes, that mocked at tears before,
With bitter drops were running o'er.
The death-pangs of long-cherished hope
Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
But, struggling with his spirit proud,
Convulsive heaved its chequered shroud,
While every sob—so mute were all—
Was heard distinctly through the hall.
The son's despair, the mother's look,
Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;

She rose, and to her side there came,
To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV.

Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
As flashes flame through sable smoke,
Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
So the deep anguish of despair
Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
" Back, beardless boy !" he sternly said,
" Back, minion ! hold'st thou thus at naught
The lesson I so lately taught ?
This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
Thank thou for punishment delayed."—
Eager as greyhound on his game,
Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
" Perish my name, if aught afford
Its chieftain safety, save his sword !"—

Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
Griped to the dagger or the brand,
And death had been—but Douglas rose,
And thrust between the struggling foes
His giant strength :—" Chieftains, forego !
I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
Madmen, forbear your frantic jar !
What ! is the Douglas fallen so far,
His daughter's hand is deemed the spoil
Of such dishonourable broil !"—
Sullen and slowly, they unclasp,
As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
And each upon his rival glared,
With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV.

Ere yet the brands aloft were flung,
Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
As faultered through terrific dream.

Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword,
And veiled his wrath in scornful word.
" Rest safe till morning; pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
Then mayst thou to James Stuart tell,
Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
Nor lackey, with his free-born clan,
The pageant pomp of earthly man.
More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
Thou canst our strength and passes show.—
Malise, what ho?"—his hench-man came;
" Give our safe conduct to the Græme."—
Young Malcolm answered, calm and bold,
" Fear nothing for thy favourite hold;
The spot, an angel deigned to grace,
Is blessed, though robbers haunt the place.
Thy churlish courtesy for those
Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
As safe to me the mountain way
At midnight, as in blaze of day,

Though with his boldest at his back,
Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
Nought here of parting will I say.
Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
So secret, but we meet agen.—
Chieftain! we too shall find an hour."—
He said, and left the sylvan bower.

XXXVI.

Old Allan followed to the strand,
(Such was the Douglas's command,)
And anxious told, how, on the morn,
The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
Much were the peril to the Græme,
From those who to the signal came;
Far up the lake 'twere safest land,
Himself would row him to the strand.

He gave his counsel to the wind,
While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
Round dirk and pouch and broad-sword rolled,
His ample plaid in tightened fold,
And stripped his limbs to such array,
As best might suit the watery way.

XXXVII.

Then spoke abrupt: " Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"—
The minstrel's hand he kindly pressed,—
" O! could I point a place of rest!
My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
Who loves the Chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honoured Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;

Nor, ere yon pride-swollen robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air !—
Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain side."—
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
And stoutly steered him from the shore;
And Allan strained his anxious eye,
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb;
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
And joyful from the shore withdrew.

END OF CANTO SECOND.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO THIRD.

The Gathering.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO THIRD.

The Gathering.

I.

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore
Who danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boy-hood legends store,
Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
How are they blotted from the things that be!
How few, all weak and withered of their force,
Wait, on the verge of dark eternity,
Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his ceaseless course.

Yet live there still who can remember well,
How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
And solitary heath, the signal knew;
And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
What time the warning note was keenly wound,
What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
While clamorous war-pipes yelled the gathering sound,
And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor, round.

II.

The summer dawn's reflected hue
To purple changed Loch-Katrine blue;
Mildly and soft the western breeze
Just kissed the lake, just stirred the trees,
And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
The mountain shadows on her breast
Were neither broken nor at rest;

In bright uncertainty they lie,
Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
The water lily to the light
Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
Begemmed with dew-drops, led her fawn;
The grey mist left the mountain side,
The torrent shewed its glistening pride;
Invisible in flecked sky,
The lark sent down her revelry;
The black-bird and the speckled thrush
Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
In answer cooed the cushat dove,
Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III.

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
With sheathed broad-sword in his hand,
Abrupt he paced the islet strand,

And eyed the rising sun, and laid
His band on his impatient blade.
Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
For such Antiquity had taught
Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
The Cross of Fire should take its road.
The shrinking band stood oft aghast
At the impatient glance he cast;—
Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
As, from the cliffs of Ben-venue,
She spread her dark sails on the wind,
And, high in middle heaven reclined,
With her broad shadow on the lake,
Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV.

A heap of withered boughs was piled,
Of juniper and rowan wild,

Mingled with shivers from the oak,
Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
Brian, the Hermit, by it stood,
Bare-footed, in his frock and hood.
His grisled beard and matted hair
Obscured a visage of despair;
His naked arms and legs, seamed o'er,
The scars of frantic penance bore.
That Monk, of savage form and face,
The impending danger of his race
Had drawn from deepest solitude,
Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
Not his the mien of Christian priest,
But Druid's, from the grave released,
Whose hardened heart and eye might brook
On human sacrifice to look.
And much, 'twas said, of heathen lore
Mixed in the charms he muttered o'er;
The hallowed creed gave only worse
And deadlier emphasis of curse;

No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
His cave the pilgrim shunned with care,
The eager huntsman knew his bound,
And in mid chase called off his hound;
Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
The desert-dweller met his path,
He prayed, and signed the cross between,
While terror took devotion's mien.

V.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
His mother watched a midnight fold,
Built deep within a dreary glen,
Where scattered lay the bones of men,
In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleached by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fettered there the hand,
Which once could burst an iron band;

Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That bucklered heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The field-fare framed her lowly nest;
There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mocked at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet flushed and full,
For heath-bell, with her purple bloom,
Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
—She said, no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
Or holy church or blessed rite,

But locked her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfessed.

VI.

Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moon-light pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,
Till, frantic, he as truth received
What of his birth the crowd believed,
And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
To meet and know his Phantom sire!
In vain, to sooth his wayward fate,
The cloister oped her pitying gate;
In vain, the! earning of the age
Unclasped: he sable-lettered page;

Even in its treasures he could find
Food for the fever of his mind.
Eager he read whatever tells
Of magic, cabala, and spells,
And every dark pursuit allied
To curious and presumptuous pride,
Till, with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII.

The desert gave him visions wild,
Such as might suit the Spectre's child.
Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
He watched the wheeling eddies boil,
Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
Beheld the river-dæmon rise ;
The mountain-mist took form and limb,
Of noontide hag, or goblin grim ;

The midnight wind came wild and dread,
Swelled with the voices of the dead;
Far on the future battle-heath
His eye beheld the ranks of death:
Thus the lone seer, from mankind hurled,
Shaped forth a disembodied world.
One lingering sympathy of mind
Still bound him to the mortal kind;
The only parent he could claim
Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.
Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride;
The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending woe,

And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII.

'Twas all prepared ;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
Down his clogged beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
A slender crosslet framed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due ;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Sooth many a chieftain's endless sleep.

The Cross, thus formed, he held on high,
With wasted hand and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
While his anathema he spoke.

IX.

"Woe to the clans-man, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,
Forgetful that its branches grew
Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
    On Alpine's dwelling low!
Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
Each clans-man's execration just
    Shall doom him wrath and woe."
He paused;—the word the Vassals took,
With forward step and fiery look,
On high their naked brands they shook,
Their clattering targets wildly strook;
    And first, in murmur low,

Then, like the billow in his course,
That far to seaward finds his source,
And flings to shore his mustered force,
Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
    "Woe to the traitor, woe!"
Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
The joyous wolf from covert drew,
The exulting eagle screamed afar,—
They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X.

The shout was hushed on lake and fell,
The Monk resumed his muttered spell.
Dismal and low its accents came,
The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
And the few words that reached the air,
Although the holiest name was there,
Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
But when he shook above the crowd
Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—

"Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear
At this dread sign the ready spear!
For, as the flames this symbol sear,
His home the refuge of his fear,
    A kindred fate shall know;
Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
While maids and matrons on his name
Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
    And infamy and woe."—
Then rose the cry of females, shrill
As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
Denouncing misery and ill,
Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
    Of curses stammered slow;
Answering, with imprecation dread,
"Sunk be his home in embers red!
And cursed be the meanest shed
That e'er shall hide the houseless head,
    We doom to want and woe!"

A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
And the grey pass where birches wave,
    On Beala-nam-bo.

XI.

Then deeper paused the priest anew,
And hard his labouring breath he drew,
While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
And eyes that glowed like fiery brand,
He meditated curse more dread,
And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
Who, summoned to his Chieftain's aid,
The signal saw and disobeyed.
The crosslet's points of sparkling wood,
He quenched among the bubbling blood,
And, as again the sign he reared,
Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
"When flits this Cross from man to man,
Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,

Burst be the ear that fails to heed !
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed !
May ravens tear the careless eyes,
Wolves make the coward heart their prize !
As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
So may his heart's-blood drench his hearth !
As dies in hissing gore the spark,
Quench thou his light, Destruction dark !
And be the grace to him denied,
Bought by this sign to all beside !"—
He ceased : no echo gave agen
The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII.

Then Roderick, with impatient look,
From Brian's hand the symbol took :
" Speed, Malise, speed !" he said, and gave
The crosslet to his hench-man brave.
" The muster-place be Lanric mead—
Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed !"—

Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
A barge across Loch-Katrine flew;
High stood the hench-man on the prow,
So rapidly the barge-men row,
The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
Were all unbroken and afloat,
Dancing in foam and ripple still,
When it had neared the mainland hill;
And from the silver beach's side
Still was the prow three fathom wide,
When lightly bounded to the land,
The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII.

Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
On fleeter foot was never tied.
Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
Thine active sinews never braced.
Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
Burst down like torrent from its crest;

With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass ;
Across the brook like roe-buck bound,
And thread the brake like questing hound ;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap ;
Parched are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now ;
Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career !
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
With rivals in the mountain race ;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course—Speed, Malise, speed !

XIV.

Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise ;

From winding glen, from upland brown,
They poured each hardy tenant down.
Nor slacked the messenger his pace;
He shewed the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe his scythe;
The herds without a keeper strayed,
The plough was in mid-furrow staid,
The falc'ner tossed his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rushed to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
Along the margin of Achray.
Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!

The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
So stilly on thy bosom deep,
The lark's blithe carol from the cloud,
Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

XV.

Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
Half hidden in the copse so green;
There may'st thou rest, thy labour done,
Their Lord shall speed the signal on.—
As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
The hench-man shot him down the way.
—What woeful accents load the gale?
The funeral yell, the female wail!
A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
A valiant warrior fights no more.
Who, in the battle or the chase,
At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—

Within the hall, where torches' ray
Supplies the excluded beams of day,
Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
His stripling son stands mournful by,
His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
The village maids and matrons round
The dismal coronach * resound.

XVI.

Coronach.

He is gone on the mountain,
  He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
  When our need was the sorest.
The font, re-appearing,
  From the rain-drops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
  To Duncan no morrow!

* Funeral Song. See Note.

The hand of the reaper
  Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
  Wails manhood in glory;
The autumn winds rushing
  Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing,
  When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi, *
  Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
  How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
  Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
  Thou art gone and for ever!

* Or *corri*. The hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.

XVII.

See Stumah, * who, the bier beside,
His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
As if some stranger step he hears.
'Tis not a mourner's muffled tread,
Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
Urge the precipitate career.
All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
The hench-man bursts into the hall;
Before the dead man's bier he stood,
Held forth the Cross besmeared with blood;
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

* *Faithful.* The name of a dog.

XVIII.

Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broad-sword tied;
But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her opened arms he flew,
Pressed on her lips a fond adieu—
"Alas!" she sobbed,—"and yet be gone,
And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!"—
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dashed from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep, to clear his labouring breast,
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
Then, like the high-bred colt, when freed
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanished, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.

Suspended was the widow's tear,
While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she marked the hench-man's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
"Kinsman," she said, "his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
The oak has fallen,—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead."—
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
While from the walls the attendant band
Snatched sword and targe, with hurried hand;
And short and flitting energy
Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,

As if the sounds to warrior dear
Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
But faded soon that borrowed force;
Grief claimed his right, and tears their course.

XIX.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
The tear, that gathered in his eye,
He left the mountain breeze to dry;
Until, where Teith's young waters roll,
Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
That graced the sable strath with green,
The chapel of Saint Bride was seen.
Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
But Angus paused not on the edge;
Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
Though reeled his sympathetic eye,

He dashed amid the torrent's roar;
His right hand high the crosslet bore,
His left the pole-axe grasped, to guide
And stay his footing in the tide.
He stumbled twice—the foam splashed high,
With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
And had he fallen,—forever there,
Farewell, Duncraggan's orphan heir!
But still, as if in parting life,
Firmer he grasped the Cross of strife,
Until the opposing bank he gained,
And up the chapel path-way strained.

XX.

A blithsome rout, that morning tide,
Had sought the chapel of Saint Bride.
Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
To Norman, heir of Armandave,
And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
The bridal now resumed their march.

In rude, but glad procession, came
Bonnetted sire and coif-clad dame;
And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
Which snooded maiden would not hear;
And children, that, unwitting why,
Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
And minstrels, that in measures vied
Before the young and bonny bride,
Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
The tear and blush of morning rose.
With virgin step, and bashful hand,
She held the kerchief's snowy band;
The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
And the glad mother in her ear
Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI.

Who meets them at the church-yard gate?—
The messenger of fear and fate!

Haste in his hurried accent lies,
And grief is swimming in his eyes.
All dripping from the recent flood,
Panting and travel-soiled he stood,
The fatal sign of fire and sword
Held forth, and spoke the appointed word;
"The muster-place is Lanrick mead.
Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"—
And must he change so soon the hand,
Just linked to his by holy band,
For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
And must the day, so blithe that rose,
And promised rapture in the close,
Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
Her summons dread, brooks no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII.

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced till on the heath
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
—What in the racer's bosom stirred?
The sickening pang of hope deferred,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame;
The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for clan and chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,

With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII.

Song.

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken * curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

* *Bracken.* Fern.

I may not, dare not, fancy now
The grief that clouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
    And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
His heart must be like bended bow,
    His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught!
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
    Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if returned from conquered foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
    To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,

Rushing, in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;
Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
The signal roused to martial coil
The sullen margin of Loch-Voil,
Waked still Loch-Doine, and to the source
Alarmed, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
Thence southward turned its rapid road
Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
Till rose in arms each man might claim
A portion in Clan-Alpine's name;
From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
Could hardly buckle on his brand,
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
Each valley, each sequestered glen,
Mustered its little horde of men,

That met as torrents from the height
In Highland dale their streams unite,
Still gathering, as they pour along,
A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
Till at the rendezvous they stood
By hundreds prompt for blows and blood;
Each trained to arms since life began,
Owning no tie but to his clan,
No oath, but by his Chieftain's hand,
No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV.

That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
Surveyed the skirts of Benvenue,
And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
To view the frontiers of Menteith.
All backward came with news of truce;
Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
In Rednock courts no horsemen wait,
No banner waved on Cardross gate,

On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
Nor scared the herons from Loch-Con;
All seemed at peace.—Now, wot ye why
The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
Ere to the muster he repair,
This western frontier scann'd with care?—
In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
For Douglas, to his promise true,
That morning from the isle withdrew,
And in a deep sequestered dell
Had sought a low and lonely cell.
By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;
A softer name the Saxons gave,
And called the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI.

It was a wild and strange retreat,
As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.

The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
Yawned like a gash on warrior's breast;
Its trench had staid full many a rock,
Hurled by primæval earthquake shock
From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
And here, in random ruin piled,
They frowned incumbent o'er the spot,
And formed the rugged sylvan grot.
The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
At noontide there a twilight made,
Unless when short and sudden shone
Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
No murmur waked the solemn still,
Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
But when the wind chafed with the lake,
A sullen sound would upward break,
With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
The incessant war of wave and rock.

Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
Seemed nodding o'er the cavern grey.
From such a den the wolf had sprung,
In such the wild cat leaves her young;
Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
Sought for a space their safety there.
Grey Superstition's whisper dread
Debarred the spot to vulgar tread;
For there, she said, did fays resort,
And satyrs * hold their sylvan court,
By moon-light tread their mystic maze,
And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII.

Now eve, with western shadows long,
Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
When Roderick, with a chosen few,
Repassed the heights of Benvenue.
Above the Goblin-cave they go,
Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-Bo;

* The *Urisk*, or Highland satyr. See Note.

The prompt retainers speed before,
To launch the shallop from the shore,
For cross Loch-Katrine lies his way
To view the passes of Achray,
And place his clansmen in array.
Yet lags the Chief in musing mind,
Unwonted sight, his men behind.
A single page, to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his lord;
The rest their way through thickets break,
And soon await him by the lake.
It was a fair and gallant sight,
To view them from the neighbouring height,
By the low-levelled sun-beam's light;
For strength and stature, from the clan
Each warrior was a chosen man,
As even afar might well be seen,
By their proud step and martial mien.
Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat

A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain strand.

XXVIII.

Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turned apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn,
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
For though his haughty heart deny
A parting meeting to his eye,

Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
That waked to sound the rustling trees.
But, hark! what mingles in the strain?—
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measures slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
What melting voice attends the strings?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX.

Hymn to the Virgin.

Ave Maria! maiden mild!
  Listen to a maiden's prayer;
Thou canst hear though from the wild,
  Thou canst save amid despair.
Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,
  Though banished, outcast, and reviled—
Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;
  Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! undefiled!
  The flinty couch we now must share,
Shall seem with down of eider piled,
  If thy protection hover there.
The murky cavern's heavy air
  Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;
Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer,
  Mother, list a suppliant child!
Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! Stainless styled!
  Foul dæmons of the earth and air,
From this their wonted haunt exiled,
  Shall flee before thy presence fair.
We bow us to our lot of care,
  Beneath thy guidance reconciled;
Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,
  And for a father hear a child!
Ave Maria!

XXX.

Died on the harp the closing hymn—
Unmoved in attitude and limb,
As listening still, Clan-Alpine's lord
Stood leaning on his heavy sword,
Until the page, with humble sign,
Twice pointed to the sun's decline.
Then, while his plaid he round him cast,
" It is the last time—'tis the last,"—
He muttered thrice,—" the last time e'er
That angel-voice shall Roderick hear !"—
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant cross the lake it shot.
They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way,
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,

Where mustered in the vale below,
Clan-Alpine's men in martial show.

XXXI.

A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly strayed;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couched to rest upon the ground,
Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was matched the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green;
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
Or lance's point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But, when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain's eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
Shook the steep mountain's steady side.

Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times returned the martial yell.
It died upon Bochastle's plain,
And Silence claimed her evening reign.

END OF CANTO THIRD.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FOURTH.

The Prophecy.

THE TANJORE ... SWATI MAHAL.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FOURTH.

The Prophecy.

I.

"THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
  And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
  And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears.
O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
  I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
Emblem of hope and love through future years!"
  Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave.

II.

Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue.
All while he stripped the wild-rose spray,
His axe and bow beside him lay,
For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
A wakeful sentinel he stood.
Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
And instant to his arms he sprung.
" Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
Art thou returned from Braes of Doune.
By thy keen step and glance I know,
Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
(For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
On distant scout had Malise gone.)
" Where sleeps the Chief?" the hench-man said.
" Apart, in yonder misty glade;
To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
Then called a slumberer by his side,

And stirred him with his slackened bow—
"Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
We seek the Chieftain; on the track,
Keep eagle watch till I come back."—

III.

Together up the pass they sped:
"What of the foeman?" Norman said.—
"Varying reports from near and far;
This certain,—that a band of war
Has for two days been ready boune,
At prompt command, to march from Doune;
King James, the while, with princely powers,
Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
Inured to bide such bitter bout,
The warrior's plaid may bear it out;
But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
A shelter for thy bonny bride?"—

"What! know ye not that Roderick's care
To the lone isle hath caused repair
Each maid and matron of the clan,
And every child and aged man
Unfit for arms? and given his charge,
Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
Upon these lakes shall float at large,
But all beside the islet moor,
That such dear pledge may rest secure?"—

IV.

"'Tis well advised—the Chieftain's plan
Bespeaks the father of his clan.
But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
Apart from all his followers true?"—
"It is, because last evening-tide
Brian an augury hath tried,
Of that dread kind which must not be
Unless in dread extremity,
The Taghairm called; by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.

Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."—

MALISE.

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew,
The choicest of the prey we had,
When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
His red eye glowed like fiery spark;
So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
Sore did he cumber our retreat,
And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
But steep and flinty was the road,
And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
And when we came to Dennan's Row,
A child might scatheless stroke his brow."—

V.

NORMAN.

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
They stretched the cataract beside,

Whose waters their wild tumult toss
Adown the black and craggy boss
Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
Couched on a shelve beneath its brink,
Close where the thundering torrents sink,
Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
The wizard waits prophetic dream.
Nor distant rests the Chief;—but hush!
See gliding slow through mist and bush,
The Hermit gains yon rock, and stands
To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
That hovers o'er a slaughtered host?
Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,*
His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

* Quartered. See Note.

—" Peace! peace! to other than to me,
Thy words were evil augury;
But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
Not aught that, gleaned from heaven or hell,
Yon fiend-begotten monk can tell.
The Chieftain joins him, see—and now,
Together they descend the brow."—

VI.

And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
The Hermit Monk held solemn word:
" Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
For man endowed with mortal life,
Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
'Tis hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
The curtain of the future world.

Yet, witness every quaking limb,
My sunken pulse, mine eye-balls dim,
My soul with harrowing anguish torn,
This for my Chieftain have I borne!—
The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
An human tongue may ne'er avouch;
No mortal man,—save he, who, bred
Between the living and the dead,
Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
Had e'er survived to say he saw.
At length the fateful answer came,
In characters of living flame!
Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
But borne and branded on my soul;—
WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE."

VII.

"Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
Good is thine augury, and fair.

Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
But first our broad-swords tasted blood.
A surer victim still I know,
Self-offered to the auspicious blow:
A spy has sought my land this morn,—
No eve shall witness his return!
My followers guard each pass's mouth,
To east, to westward, and to south;
Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
Has charge to lead his steps aside,
Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
He light on those shall bring him down.
—But see, who comes his news to show!
Malise! what tidings of the foe?"—

VIII.

"At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive,
Two Barons proud their banners wave.
I saw the Moray's silver star,
And marked the sable pale of Mar."—

"By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
I love to hear of worthy foes.
When move they on?"—"To-morrow's noon
Will see them here for battle boune."
"Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
Strengthened by them we well might bide
The battle on Benledi's side.
Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
Shall man the Trosach's shaggy glen;
Within Loch-Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
Each for his hearth and household fire,
Father for child, and son for sire,—
Lover for maid beloved!—but why—
Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd tear!
A messenger of doubt or fear?
No! sooner may the Saxon lance
Unfix Benledi from his stance,

Than doubt or terror can pierce through
The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu;
'Tis stubborn as his trusty targe.—
Each to his post!—all know their charge."—
The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
The broad-swords gleam, the banners dance,
Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
—I turn me from the martial roar,
And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX.

Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
And Ellen sits on the grey stone
Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
While vainly Allan's words of cheer
Are poured on her unheeding ear.—
" He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
With joy return;—he will—he must.
Well was it time to seek afar,
Some refuge from impending war,

When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
Are cow'd by the approaching storm?
I saw their boats, with many a light,
Floating the live-long yesternight,
Shifting like flashes darted forth
By the red streamers of the north;
I marked at morn how close they ride,
Thick moored by the lone islet's side,
Like wild ducks couching in the fen,
When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
Since this rude race dare not abide
The peril on the main-land side,
Shall not thy noble father's care
Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

X.

ELLEN.

"No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
My wakeful terrors could not blind.

When in such tender tone, yet grave,
Douglas a parting blessing gave,
The tear that glistened in his eye
Drowned not his purpose fixed and high.
My soul, though feminine and weak,
Can image his; e'en as the lake,
Itself disturbed by slightest stroke,
Reflects the invulnerable rock.
He hears reports of battle rife,
He deems himself the cause of strife.
I saw him redden, when the theme
Turned, Allan, on thine idle dream,
Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
Which I, thou said'st, about him wound.
Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
Oh no! 'twas apprehensive thought
For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
(Let me be just) that friend so true;
In danger both, and in our cause!
Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.

Why else that solemn warning given,
'If not on earth, we meet in heaven?'
Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane,
If eve return him not again,
Am I to hie and make me known?
Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
Buys his friends' safety with his own;—
He goes to do—what I had done,
Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"—

XI.

"Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
If aught should his return delay,
He only named yon holy fane
As fitting place to meet again.
Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,—
Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
My visioned sight may yet prove true,
Nor bode of ill to him or you.

When did my gifted dream beguile ?
Think of the stranger at the isle,
And think upon the harpings slow,
That presaged this approaching woe !
Sooth was my prophecy of fear ;
Believe it when it augurs cheer.
Would we had left this dismal spot !
Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
Of such a wond'rous tale I know—
Dear lady, change that look of woe !
My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."—

ELLEN.

" Well, be it as thou wilt ; I hear,
But cannot stop the bursting tear."—
The Minstrel tried his simple art,
But distant far was Ellen's heart.

XII.

Ballad.

ALICE BRAND.

Merry it is in the good green wood,
  When the mavis * and merle † are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
  And the hunter's horn is ringing.

" O Alice Brand, my native land
  Is lost for love of you ;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
  As outlaws wont to do.

" O Alice, 'twas all for thy locks so bright,
  And 'twas all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
  Thy brother bold I slew.

* Thrush. † Blackbird.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech,
  The hand that held the glaive,
For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
  And stakes to fence our cave.

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
  That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughtered deer,
  To keep the cold away."—

"O Richard! if my brother died,
  'Twas but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
  And fortune sped the lance.

"If pall and vair no more I wear,
  Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet gray,
  As gay the forest-green.

"And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand."—

XIII.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech's pride, and the oak's brown side,
Lord Richard's axe is ringing.

Up spoke the moody Elfin king,
Who won'd within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruined church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

"Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moon-light circle's screen?

Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairie's fatal green?

"Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert christened man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For muttered word or ban.

"Lay on him the curse of the withered heart,
The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die."—

XIV.

Ballad continued.

'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in good green wood,
Though the birds have stilled their singing;
The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
And Richard is faggots bringing.

Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
  Before Lord Richard stands,
And, as he crossed and blessed himself,
"I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
  "That is made with bloody hands."—

But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
  That woman void of fear,—
"And if there's blood upon his hand,
  'Tis but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
  It cleaves unto his hand,
The stain of thine own kindly blood,
  The blood of Ethert Brand."—

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
  And made the holy sign,—
"And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
  A spotless hand is mine.

" And I conjure thee, Dæmon elf,
By Him whom Dæmons fear,
To shew us whence thou art thyself?
And what thine errand here?"—

XV.

Ballad continued.

" 'Tis merry, 'tis merry, in Fairy land,
When fairy birds are singing,
When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

" And gaily shines the Fairy land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

" And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

" It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatched away,
To the joyless Elfin bower.

" But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
I might regain my mortal mold,
As fair a form as thine."—

She crossed him once—she crossed him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
The darker grew the cave.

She crossed him thrice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mold,
Her brother, Ethart Brand!

Merry it is in good green wood,
  When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey,
  When all the bells were ringing.

XVI.

Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climbed the steepy glade:
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'Tis Snowdoun's Knight, 'tis James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppressed a scream:
"O stranger! in such hour of fear,
What evil hap has brought thee here?"—
"An evil hap how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,

And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
" The happy path !—what ! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass ?"—" No, by my faith !
Nor saw I aught could augur scathe."—
" Oh haste thee, Allan, to the kern,
—Yonder his tartans I discern ;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure !—
What prompted thee, unhappy man ?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him, to guide thee here."—

XVII.

" Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be,
Since it is worthy care from thee ;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weighed with death.

Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.
I come to bear thee from a wild,
Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
By this soft hand to lead thee far
From frantic scenes of feud and war.
Near Bochastle my horses wait;
They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
I'll guard thee like a tender flower,"—
"O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,
To say I do not read thy heart;
Too much, before, my selfish ear
Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;
And how, O how, can I atone
The wreck my vanity brought on!—
One way remains—I'll tell him all—
Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!

Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
But first—my father is a man
Outlawed and exiled, under ban;
The price of blood is on his head,
With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
Still would'st thou speak?—then hear the truth!
Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
If yet he is!—exposed for me
And mine to dread extremity—
Thou hast the secret of my heart;
Forgive, be generous, and depart."—

XVIII.

Fitz-James knew every wily train
A lady's fickle heart to gain,
But here he knew and felt them vain.
There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
To give her stedfast speech the lye;
In maiden confidence she stood,
Though mantled in her cheek the blood,

And told her love with such a sigh
Of deep and hopeless agony,
As death had sealed her Malcolm's doom,
And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
Hope vanished from Fitz-James's eye,
But not with hope fled sympathy.
He proffered to attend her side,
As brother would a sister guide.—
" O ! little know'st thou Roderick's heart !
Safer for both we go apart.
O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
If thou may'st trust yon wily kern."—
With hand upon his forehead laid,
The conflict of his mind to shade,
A parting step or two he made ;
Then, as some thought had crossed his brain,
He paused, and turned, and came again.

XIX.

"Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
It chanced in fight that my poor sword
Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
And bade, when I had boon to crave,
To bring it back, and boldly claim
The recompence that I would name.
Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
But one who lives by lance and sword,
Whose castle is his helm and shield,
His lordship, the embattled field.
What from a prince can I demand,
Who neither reck of state nor land?
Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
Each guard and usher knows the sign.
Seek thou the king without delay;
This signet shall secure thy way;

And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me."—
He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kissed her hand—and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He joined his guide, and wending down
The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch-Katrine to Achray.

XX.

All in the Trosach's glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whooped loud and high—
" Murdoch! was that a signal cry?"—
He stammered forth,—" I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare."—
He looked—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—" Ah! gallant grey!

For thee—for me perchance—'twere well
We ne'er had seen the Trosach's dell.—
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die."—
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI.

Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted Female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
In tattered weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seemed nought to mark, yet all to spy.
Her brow was wreathed with gaudy broom;
With gesture wild she waved a plume

Of feathers, which the eagles fling
To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
Where scarce was footing for the goat.
The tartan plaid she first descried,
And shrieked, till all the rocks replied;
As loud she laughed when near they drew,
For then the lowland garb she knew;
And then her hands she wildly wrung,
And then she wept, and then she sung.—
She sung!—the voice, in better time,
Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
And now, though strained and roughened, still
Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII.

Song.

"They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
  They say my brain is warped and wrung—
I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
  I cannot pray in Highland tongue.

But were I now where Allan glides,
Or heard my native Devan's tides,
So sweetly would I rest, and pray
That Heaven would close my wintry day!

"'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
They bade me to the church repair;
It was my bridal morn they said,
And my true love would meet me there.
But woe betide the cruel guile,
That drowned in blood the morning smile!
And woe betide the fairy dream!
I only waked to sob and scream."—

XXIII.

"Who is this maid? what means her lay?
She hovers o'er the hollow way,
And flutters wide her mantle grey,
As the lone heron spreads his wing,
By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."—

"'Tis Blanch of Devan," Murdoch said,
"A crazed and captive lowland maid,
Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
When Roderick forayed Devan-side.
The gay bridegroom resistance made,
And felt our Chief's unconquered blade.
I marvel she is now at large,
But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
"Now, if thou strikest her but one blow,
I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
As ever peasant pitched a bar."—
"Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried,
And pressed her to Fitz-James's side.
"See the grey pennons I prepare,
To seek my true-love through the air!
I will not lend that savage groom,
To break his fall, one downy plume!
No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
The wolves shall batten on his bones,

And then shall his detested plaid,
By bush and briar in mid air staid,
Wave forth a banner fair and free,
Meet signal for their revelry."—

XXIV.

"Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"—
"O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.—
Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
But still it loves the Lincoln green;
And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
Still, still it loves the lowland tongue.

"For O my sweet William was forester true,
  He stole poor Blanche's heart away!
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
  And so blithely he trilled the lowland lay!"

It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise, and guessest well."—

Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
Still on the Clans-man, fearfully,
She fixed her apprehensive eye;
Then turned it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o'er the glen.

XXV.

" The toils are pitched, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.

" It was a stag, a stag of ten,*
Bearing his branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

* Having ten branches on his antlers.

" It was there he met with a wounded doe,
  She was bleeding deathfully ;
She warned him of the toils below,
  O so faithfully, faithfully !

" He had an eye, and he could heed,
  Ever sing warily, warily ;
He had a foot, and he could speed—
  Hunters watch so narrowly."—

XXVI.

Fitz-James's mind was passion-toss'd,
When Ellen's hints and fears were lost ;
But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
Not like a stag that spies the snare,
But lion of the hunt aware,
He waved at once his blade on high,
" Disclose thy treachery, or die !"—

Forth at full speed the Clans-man flew,
But in his race his bow he drew.
The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast.—
Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
The fierce avenger is behind!
Fate judges of the rapid strife—
The forfeit death—the prize is life!
Thy kindred ambush lies before,
Close couched upon the heathery moor;
Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
Thine ambushed kin thou ne'er shalt see,
The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
—Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
Ere he can win his blade again.

Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon eye,
He grimly smiled to see him die;
Then slower wended back his way,
Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII.

She sate beneath the birchen tree,
Her elbow resting on her knee;
She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
And gazed on it, and feebly laughed;
Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
Daggled with blood, beside her lay.
The Knight to staunch the life-stream tried,—
" Stranger, it is in vain!" she cried.
" This hour of death has given me more
Of reason's power than years before;
For, as these ebbing veins decay,
My frenzied visions fade away.
A helpless injured wretch I die,
And something tells me in thine eye,

That thou wert mine avenger born.—
Seest thou this tress ?—O ! still I've worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Through danger, frenzy, and despair !
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.
I will not tell thee when 'twas shred,
Nor from what guiltless victim's head—
My brain would turn !—but it shall wave
Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
And thou wilt bring it me again.—
I waver still !—O God ! more bright
Let Reason beam her parting light !—
O ! by thy knighthood's honoured sign,
And for thy life preserved by mine,
When thou shalt see a darksome man,
Who boasts him Chief of Alpine's clan,
With tartans broad and shadowy plume,
And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SA...

Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
And wreak poor Blanche of Devan's wrong!—
They watch for thee by pass and fell . . .
Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell."—

XXVIII.

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
Fast poured his eye at pity's claims,
And now, with mingled grief and ire,
He saw the murdered maid expire.
"God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"—
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
And placed it on his bonnet side:
"By Him whose word is truth! I swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I embrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!
—But hark! what means yon faint halloo?

The chase is up,—but they shall know,
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."—
Barred from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turned back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couched him in a thicket hoar,
And thought his toils and perils o'er:—
" Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
That all this highland hornet's nest
Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—
Like blood-hounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—
If farther through the wilds I go,
I only fall upon the foe;

I'll couch me here till evening grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."—

XXIX.

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapped in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;
Enough remains of glimmering light
To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
Yet not enough from far to show
His figure to the watchful foe.
With cautious step and ear awake,
He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
And not the summer solstice, there,
Temper'd the midnight mountain air,
But every breeze, that swept the wold,
Benumbed his drenched limbs with cold.
In dread, in danger, and alone,
Famished and chilled, through ways unknown,
Tangled and steep, he journeyed on;

Till as a rock's huge point he turned,
A watch-fire close before him burned.

XXX.

Beside its embers red and clear,
Basked, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
" Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"—
" A stranger."—" What dost thou require?"—
" Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
My life's beset, my path is lost,
The gale has chilled my limbs with frost."—
" Art thou a friend to Roderick?"—" No."—
" Thou darest not call thyself a foe?"—
" I dare! to him and all the band
He brings to aid his murderous hand."—
" Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
The privilege of chace may claim,
Though space and law the stag we lend,
Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,

Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped or slain?
Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
Who say thou camest a secret spy!"—
"They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest."—
"If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bear'st the belt and spur of Knight."—
"Then by these tokens may'st thou know,
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe."—
"Enough, enough; sit down and share
A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare."—

XXXI.

He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The hardened flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.

He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech addressed.
" Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clans-man born, a kinsman true ;
Each word against his honour spoke,
Demands of me avenging stroke ;
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 'tis said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne ;
It rests with me, here, brand to brand,
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand :
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws ;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
And stranger is a holy name ;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day ;
Myself will guide thee on the way,

O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,
As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."—
"I take thy courtesy, by Heaven,
As freely as 'tis nobly given!"—
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."—
With that he shook the gathered heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

END OF CANTO FOURTH.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Combat.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO FIFTH.

The Combat.

I.

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewildered pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the brow
of War.

II.

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
Looked out upon the dappled sky,
Muttered their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael * around him threw
His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain grey.
A wildering path !—they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,

* The Scottish Highlander calls himself *Gael*, or Gaul, and terms the Lowlanders, *Sassenach*, or Saxons.

And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;
Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
Gained not the length of horseman's lance.
'Twas oft so steep, the foot was fain
Assistance from the hand to gain;
So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

III.

At length they came where, stern and steep,
The hill sinks down upon the deep.
Here Vennachar in silver flows,
There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
Ever the hollow path twined on,
Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
An hundred men might hold the post
With hardihood against a host.

The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
And patches bright of bracken green,
And heather black, that waved so high,
It held the copse in rivalry.
But where the lake slept deep and still,
Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
And oft both path and hill were torn,
Where wintry torrent down had borne,
And heaped upon the cumbered land
Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
So toilsome was the road to trace,
The guide, abating of his pace,
Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
And asked Fitz-James, by what strange cause
He sought these wilds? traversed by few,
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV.

"Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;

Yet, sooth to tell," the Saxon said,
" I dreamed not now to claim its aid.
When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewildered in pursuit of game,
All seemed as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain guide,
Though deep, perchance, the villain lied."—
" Yet why a second venture try ?"—
" A warior thou, and ask me why !—
Moves our free course by such fixed cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws ?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day ;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
A Knight's free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound strayed,
The merry glance of mountain maid ;

Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger's self is lure alone."—

V.

" Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine raised by Mar?"—
" —No, by my word;—of bands prepared
To guard King James's sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
Which else in Doune had peaceful hung."—
" Free be they flung! for we were loth
Their silken folds should feast the moth.
Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
Clan-Alpine's pine in banner brave.
But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,
Bewildered in the mountain game,

Whence the bold boast by which you show
Vich-Alpine's vowed and mortal foe?"—
"Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Save as an outlaw'd desperate man,
The chief of a rebellious clan,
Who, in the Regent's court and sight,
With ruffian dagger stabbed a knight;
Yet this alone might from his part
Sever each true and loyal heart."—

VI.

Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
Dark lowered the clans-man's sable scowl.
A space he paused, then sternly said,—
"And heard'st thou why he drew his blade?
Heard'st thou that shameful word and blow
Brought Roderick's vengeance on his foe?
What reck'd the Chieftain if he stood
On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood?

He rights such wrong where it is given,
If it were in the court of heaven."—
" Still was it outrage ;—yet, 'tis true,
Not then claimed sovereignty his due ;
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrowed truncheon of command,
The young King, mew'd in Stirling tower,
Was stranger to respect and power.
But then, thy Chieftain's robber life !—
Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
Wrenching from ruined lowland swain
His herds and harvest reared in vain,—
Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."—

VII.

The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answered with disdainful smile,—
" Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I marked thee send delighted eye,

Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between:—
These fertile plains, that softened vale,
Were once the birth-right of the Gaël;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fattened steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'—
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,

To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Aye, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
But one along yon river's maze,—
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold,
That plundering Lowland field and fold
Is aught but retribution true?
Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."—

VIII.

Answered Fitz-James,—" And, if I sought,
Think'st thou no other could be brought?
What deem ye of my path way-laid,
My life given o'er to ambuscade?"—
" As of a meed to rashness due:
Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—

I seek my hound, or falcon strayed,
I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
Free hadst thou been to come and go;
But secret path marks secret foe.
Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
Hadst thou, unheard, been doomed to die,
Save to fulfil an augury."—
"Well, let it pass; nor will I now
Fresh cause of enmity avow,
To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
Enough, I am by promise tied
To match me with this man of pride:
Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
In peace; but when I come agen,
I come with banner, brand and bow,
As leader seeks his mortal foe.
For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
As I, until before me stand
This rebel Chieftain and his band."—

IX.

" Have, then, thy wish !"—he whistled shrill,
And he was answered from the hill ;
Wild as the scream of the curlieu,
From crag to crag the signal flew.
Instant, through copse and heath, arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows ;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up at once the lurking foe ;
From shingles grey their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow-wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.
That whistle garrison'd the glen
At once with full five hundred men,
As if the yawning hill to heaven
A subterranean host had given.

Watching their leader's beck and will,
All silent there they stood and still.
Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
As if an infant's touch could urge
Their headlong passage down the verge,
With step and weapon forward flung,
Upon the mountain-side they hung.
The mountaineer cast glance of pride
Along Benledi's living side,
Then fixed his eye and sable brow
Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"—

X.

Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
The life-blood thrilled with sudden start,
He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
Returned the Chief his haughty stare,

His back against a rock he bore,
And firmly placed his foot before :—
" Come one, come all ! this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I."—
Sir Roderick marked—and in his eyes
Respect was mingled with surprise,
And the stern joy which warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.
Short space he stood—then waved his hand :
Down sunk the disappearing band ;
Each warrior vanished where he stood,
In broom or bracken, heath or wood ;
Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
In osiers pale and copses low ;
It seemed as if their mother Earth
Had swallowed up her warlike birth.
The wind's last breath had tossed in air,
Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
The next but swept a lone hill-side,
Where heath and fern were waving wide ;

The sun's last glance was glinted back,
From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
The next, all unreflected, shone
On bracken green, and cold grey stone.

XI.

Fitz-James looked round—yet scarce believed
The witness that his sight received;
Such apparition well might seem
Delusion of a dreadful dream.
Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
And to his look the Chief replied,
"Fear nought—nay, that I need not say—
But—doubt not aught from mine array.
Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
As far as Coilantogle ford:
Nor would I call a clans-man's brand
For aid against one valiant hand,
Though on our strife lay every vale
Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.

So move we on;—I only meant
To show the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."—
They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
As ever knight that belted glaive;
Yet dare not say, that now his blood
Kept on its wont and tempered flood,
As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
That seeming lonesome path-way through,
Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
With lances, that to take his life
Waited but signal from a guide,
So late dishonoured and defied.
Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
The vanished guardians of the ground,
And still from copse and heather deep,
Fancy saw spear and broad-sword peep,
And in the plover's shrilly strain,
The signal whistle heard again.

Nor breathed he free till far behind
The pass was left; for then they wind
Along a wide and level green,
Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
Nor rush, nor bush of broom was near,
To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII.

The Chief in silence strode before,
And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
From Vennachar in silver breaks,
Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
And here his course the Chieftain staid,
Threw down his target and his plaid,
And to the Lowland warrior said:—
"Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.

This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
This head of a rebellious clan,
Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
See, here, all vantageless I stand,
Armed like thyself, with single brand;
For this is Coilantogle ford,
And thou must keep thee with thy sword."—

XIII.

The Saxon paused:—" I ne'er delayed,
When foeman bade me draw my blade;
Nay more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death:
Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
And my deep debt for life preserved,
A better meed have well deserved:—
Can nought but blood our feud atone?
Are there no means?"—" No, Stranger, none!

And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
For thus spoke Fate by prophet bred
Between the living and the dead;
"Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
His party conquers in the strife."—
"Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
"The riddle is already read.
Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
Thus Fate has solved her prophecy,
Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
To James, at Stirling, let us go,
When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
Or if the King shall not agree
To grant thee grace and favour free,
I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
That, to thy native strengths restored,
With each advantage shalt thou stand,
That aids thee now to guard thy land."—

XIV.

Dark lightning flashed from Roderick's eye—
" Soars thy presumption then so high,
Because a wretched kern ye slew,
Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
My clans-man's blood demands revenge.—
Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
My thought, and hold thy valour light
As that of some vain carpet-knight,
Who ill deserved my courteous care,
And whose best boast is but to wear
A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
—" I thank thee, Roderick, for the word!
It nerves my heart, it steels my sword;
For I have sworn this braid to stain
In the best blood that warms thy vein.

Now, truce, farewell! and ruth, begone!—
Yet think not that by thee alone,
Proud Chief! can courtesy be shewn;
Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
Start at my whistle clans-men stern,
Of this small horn one feeble blast
Would fearful odds against thee cast.
But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
Then each at once his faulchion drew,
Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
Each looked to sun, and stream, and plain,
As what they ne'er might see again;
Then, foot, and point, and eye opposed,
In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw,

Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
Had death so often dashed aside;
For, trained abroad his arms to wield,
Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
He practised every pass and ward,
To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
While less expert, though stronger far,
The Gael maintained unequal war.
Three times in closing strife they stood,
And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
The gushing floods the tartans dyed.
Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
And showered his blows like wintry rain;
And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
Against the winter shower is proof,
The foe invulnerable still
Foiled his wild rage by steady skill;
Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,

And, backwards borne upon the lea,
Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI.

"Now, yield thee, or, by Him who made
The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"—
"Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
Let recreant yield, who fears to die."—
Like adder darting from his coil,
Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung,
Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
And locked his arms his foeman round.—
Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
They tug, they strain!—down, down, they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.

The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
His knee was planted in his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,
Reeled soul and sense, reeled brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII.

He faultered thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeemed, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appeared his last;
In Roderick's gore he dipp'd the braid,—
"Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that Faith and Valour give."—
With that he blew a bugle-note,
Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonnetted, and by the wave
Sate down his brow and hands to lave.
Then faint afar are heard the feet
Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
The sounds increase, and now are seen
Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
By loosened rein, a saddled steed;

Each onward held his headlong course,
And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
With wonder view'd the bloody spot—
—" Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
We destined for a fairer freight,
And bring him on to Stirling straight;
I will before at better speed,
To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
The sun rides high;—I must be boune
To see the archer-game at noon;
But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII.

" Stand, Bayard, stand!"—the steed obeyed,
With arching neck and bended head,
And glancing eye, and quivering ear,
As if he loved his lord to hear.

No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
No grasp upon the saddle laid,
But wreathed his left hand in the mane,
And lightly bounded from the plain,
Turned on the horse his armed heel,
And stirred his courage with the steel,
Bounded the fiery steed in air,
The rider sate erect and fair,
Then, like a bolt from steel cross-bow
Forth launched, along the plain they go,
They dashed that rapid torrent through,
And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
Still at the gallop pricked the Knight,
His merry-men followed as they might.
Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
And in the race they mock thy tide;
Torry and Lendrick now are past,
And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
They rise, the bannered towers of Doune,
They sink in distant woodland soon;

Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
They sweep like breeze through Ochtertyre;
They mark just glance and disappear
The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
They bathe their coursers' sweltering sides,
Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
And on the opposing shore take ground,
With plash, with scramble, and with bound.
Right hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
And soon the bulwark of the North,
Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
Upon their fleet career looked down.

XIX.

As up the flinty path they strained,
Sudden his steed the leader reined;
A signal to his squire he flung,
Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
"Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
Of stature tall and poor array?

Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
With which he scales the mountain side?
Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?"—
"No, by my word;—a burly groom
He seems, who in the field or chase
A Baron's train would nobly grace."—
"Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply,
And jealousy, no sharper eye?
Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
That stately form and step I knew;
Like form in Scotland is not seen,
Treads not such step on Scottish green.
'Tis James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
The uncle of the banished Earl.
Away, away, to court, to show
The near approach of dreaded foe:
The King must stand upon his guard;
Douglas and he must meet prepared."—
Then right hand wheeled their steeds, and strait
They won the castle's postern gate.

XX.

The Douglas, who had bent his way
From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey grey,
Now, as he climbed the rocky shelf,
Held sad communion with himself:—
"Yes! all is true my fears could frame:
A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
And fiery Roderick soon will feel
The vengeance of the royal steel.
I, only I, can ward their fate,—
God grant the ransom come not late!
The Abbess hath her promise given,
My child shall be the bride of Heaven;—
—Be pardoned one repining tear!
For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
How excellent—but that is by,
And now my business is to die.
—Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
A Douglas by his sovereign bled,

And thou, O sad and fatal mound !*
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound,
As on the noblest of the land
Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—
The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
Prepare,—for Douglas seeks his doom !
—But hark ! what blithe and jolly peal
Makes the Franciscan steeple reel ?
And see ! upon the crowded street,
In motley groups what masquers meet !
Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
And merry morrice-dancers come.
I guess, by all this quaint array,
The burghers hold their sports to-day.
James will be there ;—he loves such show,
Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
As well as where, in proud career,
The high-born tilter shivers spear.

* An eminence on the north-east of the castle, where state criminals were executed. See Note.

I'll follow to the Castle-park,
And play my prize ;—King James shall mark,
If age has tamed these sinews stark,
Whose force so oft, in happier days,
His boyish wonder loved to praise."—

XXI.

The Castle gates were open flung,
The quivering draw-bridge rocked and rung,
And echoed loud the flinty street
Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
As slowly down the steep descent
Fair Scotland's King and nobles went,
While all along the crowded way
Was jubilee and loud huzza.
And ever James was bending low,
To his white jennet's saddle bow,
Doffing his cap to city dame,
Who smiled and blushed for pride and shame.
And well the simperer might be vain,—
He chose the fairest of the train.

Gravely he greets each city sire,
Commends each pageant's quaint attire,
Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
" Long live the Commons' King, King James !"
Behind the King thronged peer and knight,
And noble dame and damsel bright,
Whose fiery steeds ill-brooked the stay
Of the steep street and crowded way.
—But in the train you might discern
Dark lowering brow and visage stern ;
There nobles mourned their pride restrained,
And the mean burgher's joys disdained ;
And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
Were each from home a banished man,
There thought upon their own grey tower,
Their waving woods, their feudal power,
And deemed themselves a shameful part
Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII.

Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
Their chequered bands the joyous route.
There morricers, with bell at heel,
And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
But chief, beside the butts, there stand
Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
Friar Tuck with quarter-staff and cowl,
Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
Maid Marian, fair as ivory bone,
Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
Their bugles challenge all that will,
In archery to prove their skill.
The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
His first shaft centered in the white,
And when in turn he shot again,
His second split the first in twain.
From the King's hand must Douglas take
A silver dart, the archers' stake;

Fondly he watched, with watery eye,
Some answering glance of sympathy,—
No kind emotion made reply!
Indifferent as to archer wight,
The Monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII.

Now, clear the Ring! for, hand to hand,
The manly wrestlers take their stand.
Two o'er the rest superior rose,
And proud demanded mightier foes,
Nor called in vain; for Douglas came.
—For life is Hugh of Larbert lame,
Scarce better John of Alloa's fare,
Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
Prize of the wrestling match, the King
To Douglas gave a golden ring,
While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
As frozen drop of wintry dew.

Douglas would speak, but in his breast
His struggling soul his words suppress'd:
Indignant then he turned him where
Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
To hurl the massive bar in air.
When each his utmost strength had shewn,
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
From its deep bed, then heaved it high,
And sent the fragment through the sky,
A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
And still in Stirling's royal park,
The grey-haired sires, who know the past,
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
And moralize on the decay
Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV.

The vale with loud applauses rang,
The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang;

The King, with look unmoved, bestowed
A purse well filled with pieces broad.
Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder scan,
And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong:
The old men mark'd, and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And winked aside, and told each son
Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm;
The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.

Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
Of peers who circled round the King,
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or called the banished man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honoured place,
Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he, whom royal eyes disown,
When was his form to courtiers known?

XXV.

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite grey-hounds should pull down,
That venison free, and Bourdeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.

But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North,—
Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And, dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and, with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
And oft would Ellen, Lufra's neck,
In maiden glee, with garlands deck;

They were such play-mates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
In darkened brow and flashing eye;—
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntletted in glove of steel.

XXVI.

Then clamoured loud the royal train,
And brandished swords and staves amain.
But stern the Baron's warning—" Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!
Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
King James, the Douglas, doomed of old,
And vainly sought for near and far,
A victim to atone the war,

A willing victim, now attends,
Nor craves thy grace but for his friends."—
—" Thus is my clemency repaid?
Presumptuous Lord!" the Monarch said;
" Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
The only man, in whom a foe
My woman-mercy would not know:
But shall a Monarch's presence brook
Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
Give the offender fitting ward.—
Break off the sports!"—for tumult rose,
And yeoman 'gan to bend their bows,—
" Break off the sports!"—he said, and frowned,
" And bid our horsemen clear the ground."—

XXVII.

Then uproar wild and misarray
Marr'd the fair form of festal day.

The horsemen pricked among the crowd,
Repelled by threats and insult loud;
To earth are borne the old and weak,
The timorous fly, the women shriek;
With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
The hardier urge tumultuous war.
At once round Douglas darkly sweep
The royal spears in circle deep,
And slowly scale the path-way steep;
While on the rear in thunder pour
The rabble with disordered roar.
With grief the noble Douglas saw
The commons rise against the law,
And to the leading soldier said,—
" Sir John of Hyndford! 'twas my blade,
That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
For that good deed, permit me then
A word with these misguided men.—

XXVIII.

“ Hear, gentle friends ! ere yet, for me,
Ye break the bands of fealty.
My life, my honour, and my cause,
I tender free to Scotland’s laws.
Are these so weak as must require
The aid of your misguided ire ?
Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
Is then my selfish rage so strong,
My sense of public weal so low,
That for mean vengeance on a foe,
Those chords of love I should unbind,
Which knit my country and my kind ?
Oh no ! Believe, in yonder tower
It will not sooth my captive hour,
To know those spears our foes should dread,
For me in kindred gore are red ;
To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
For me, that mother wails her son ;

For me, that widow's mate expires,
For me, that orphans weep their sires,
That patriots mourn insulted laws,
And curse the Douglas for the cause.
O let your patience ward such ill,
And keep your right to love me still!"—

XXIX.

The crowd's wild fury sunk again
In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
With lifted hands and eyes, they prayed
For blessings on his generous head,
Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Blessed him who stayed the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrong and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:

Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the Castle's battled verge,
With sighs, resigned his honoured charge.

XXX.

The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
" O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, " the loud acclaim,
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
Strained for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hailed the day
When first I broke the Douglas sway;

And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
And fierce as Frenzy's fevered blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who would wish to be thy king!—

XXXI.

"But soft! what messenger of speed
Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
I guess his cognizance afar—
What from our cousin, John of Mar?"—
"He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
Within the safe and guarded ground:
For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
Most sure for evil to the throne,—

The outlawed Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
Has summoned his rebellious crew;
'Tis said, in James of Bothwell's aid
These loose banditti stand arrayed.
The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
To break their muster marched, and soon
Your grace will hear of battle fought;
But earnestly the Earl besought,
Till for such danger he provide,
With scanty train you will not ride."—

XXXII.

"Thou warn'st me I have done amiss,—
I should have earlier looked to this:
I lost it in this bustling day.
—Retrace with speed thy former way;
Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
The best of mine shall be thy meed.
Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
We do forbid the intended war;

Roderick, this morn, in single fight,
Was made our prisoner by a knight,
And Douglas hath himself and cause
Submitted to our kingdom's laws.
The tidings of their leaders lost
Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
For their Chief's crimes, avenging steel.
Bear Mar our message, Braco, fly!"—
He turned his steed,—" My liege, I hie,
Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
I fear the broad-swords will be drawn."—
The turf the flying courser spurned,
And to his towers the King returned.

XXXIII.

Ill with King James's mood that day,
Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
Soon were dismissed the courtly throng,
And soon cut short the festal song.

Nor less upon the saddened town
The evening sunk in sorrow down;
The burghers spoke of civil jar,
Of rumoured feuds and mountain war,
Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
All up in arms:—the Douglas too,
They mourned him pent within the hold,
"Where stout Earl William was of old,"*—
And there his word the speaker staid,
And finger on his lip he laid,
Or pointed to his dagger blade.
But jaded horsemen, from the west,
At evening to the Castle pressed;
And busy talkers said they bore
Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
At noon the deadly fray begun,
And lasted till the set of sun.
Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

* Stabbed by James II. in Stirling Castle.

END OF CANTO FIFTH.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO SIXTH.

The Guard-Room.

THE

LADY OF THE LAKE.

CANTO SIXTH.

The Guard-Room.

I.

THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
  Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
  Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
  Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
  And warning student pale to leave his pen,
And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.

What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
Are witnessed by that red and struggling beam!
The fevered patient, from his pallet low,
Through crowded hospital beholds it stream;
The ruined maiden trembles at its gleam,
The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
Trims her sick infant's couch, and sooths his feeble wail.

II.

At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
While drums, with rolling note, foretell
Relief to weary centinel.
Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
And, struggling with the smoky air,
Deaden'd the torches' yellow glare.

In comfortless alliance shone
The lights through arch of blackened stone,
And showed wild shapes in garb of war,
Faces deformed with beard and scar,
All haggard from the midnight watch,
And fevered with the stern debauch;
For the oak table's massive board,
Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
And beakers drained, and cups o'erthrown,
Showed in what sport the night had flown.
Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
Some laboured still their thirst to quench;
Some, chilled with watching, spread their hands
O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
While round them, or beside them flung,
At every step their harness rung.

III.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,

Nor owned the patriarchal claim
Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they, from far who roved,
To live by battle which they loved.
There the Italian's clouded face,
The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
The mountain-loving Switzer there
More freely breathed in mountain-air;
The Fleming there despised the soil,
That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
Their rolls shewed French and German name;
And merry England's exiles came,
To share, with ill-concealed disdain,
Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
All brave in arms, well trained to wield
The heavy halbert, brand, and shield;
In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
In pillage, fierce and uncontrouled;
And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV.

They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch-Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;—
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up-started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.

He grieved, that day their games cut short,
And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
Like brethren of the brand and spear."—

V.

Soldier's Song.

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly black jack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flaggon of sack;
Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
Drink upsees* out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
Says, that Belzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;

* A Bacchanalian interjection, borrowed from the Dutch.

Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
And 'tis right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
Who infringe the domains of our good mother Church.
Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI.

The warder's challenge, heard without,
Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
A soldier to the portal went,—
"Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
And, beat for jubilee the drum!
A maid and minstrel with him come."—
Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarr'd,
Was entering now the Court of Guard,

A harper with him, and, in plaid
All muffled close, a mountain maid,
Who backward shrunk to 'scape the view
Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
" What news ?" they roared :—" I only know,
From noon till eve we fought with foe,
As wild and as untameable,
As the rude mountains where they dwell.
On both sides store of blood is lost,
Nor much success can either boast."—
" But whence thy captives, friend ? such spoil
As theirs must needs reward thy toil.
Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp ;
Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp,
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band."—

VII.

" No, comrade ;—no such fortune mine.
After the fight, these sought our line,

That aged harper and the girl,
And, having audience of the Earl,
Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
And bring them hitherward with speed.
Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
For none shall do them shame or harm."—
" Hear ye his boast!" cried John of Brent,
Ever to strife and jangling bent,—
" Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
And yet the jealous niggard grudge
To pay the forester his fee!
I'll have my share howe'er it be,
Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee."—
Bertram his forward step withstood;
And, burning in his vengeful mood,
Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
But Ellen boldly stepp'd between,
And dropp'd at once the tartan screen;—
So, from his morning cloud, appears
The sun of May, through summer tears.

The savage soldiery, amazed,
As on descended angel gazed;
Even hardy Brent, abashed and tamed,
Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII.

Boldly she spoke,—" Soldiers, attend!
My father was the soldier's friend;
Cheered him in camps, in marches led,
And with him in the battle bled.
Not from the valiant, or the strong,
Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."—
Answered De Brent, most forward still
In every feat or good or ill,—
" I shame me of the part I played:
And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
An outlaw I by Forest laws,
And merry Needwood knows the cause.
Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,"—
He wiped his iron eye and brow,
" Must bear such age, I think, as thou.—

Hear ye, my mates ;—I go to call
The Captain of our watch to hall :
There lies my halbert on the floor ;
And he that steps my halbert o'er,
To do the maid injurious part,
My shaft shall quiver in his heart !—
Beware loose speech, or jesting rough :
Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."—

IX.

Their Captain came, a gallant young,—
(Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight ;
Gay was his mien, his humour light,
And, though by courtesy controuled,
Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
The high-born maiden ill could brook
The scanning of his curious look
And dauntless eye ;—and, yet, in sooth,
Young Lewis was a generous youth ;

But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
Ill-suited to the garb and scene,
Might lightly bear construction strange,
And give loose fancy scope to range.
—" Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
Like arrant damosel of yore?
Does thy high quest a knight require,
Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
Her dark eye flashed;—she paused and sighed,—
" O what have I to do with pride!—
—Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
A suppliant for a father's life,
I crave an audience of the King.
Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
The royal pledge of grateful claims,
Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."—

X.

The signet ring young Lewis took,
With deep respect and altered look;
And said,—“ This ring our duties own;
And, pardon, if to worth unknown,
In semblance mean obscurely veiled,
Lady, in aught my folly failed.
Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
The King shall know what suitor waits.
Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
Repose you till his waking hour;
Female attendance shall obey
Your hest, for service or array.
Permit I marshal you the way.”—
But, ere she followed, with the grace
And open bounty of her race,
She bade her slender purse be shared
Among the soldiers of the guard.

The rest with thanks their guerdon took ;
But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
On the reluctant maiden's hold
Forced bluntly back the proffered gold ;—
" Forgive a haughty English heart,
And O forget its ruder part !
The vacant purse shall be my share,
Which in my barret-cap I'll bear,
Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
Where gayer crests may keep afar."—
With thanks,—'twas all she could,—the maid
His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI.

When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
Allan made suit to John of Brent :—
" My lady safe, O let your grace
Give me to see my master's face !
His minstrel I,—to share his doom
Bound from the cradle to the tomb.

Tenth in descent, since first my sires
Waked for his noble house their lyres,
Nor one of all the race was known
But prized its weal above their own.
With the Chief's birth begins our care;
Our harp must sooth the infant heir,
Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
His earliest feat of field or chase;
In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
We cheer his board, we sooth his sleep,
Nor leave him till we pour our verse,
A doleful tribute! o'er his hearse.
Then let me share his captive lot;
It is my right—deny it not!"—
"Little we reck," said John of Brent,
"We Southern men, of long descent;
Nor wot we how a name—a word—
Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
Yet kind my noble landlord's part,—
God bless the house of Beaudesert!

And, but I loved to drive the deer,
More than to guide the labouring steer,
I had not dwelt an outcast here.
Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."—

XII.

Then, from a rusted iron hook,
A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
Lighted a torch, and Allan led
Through grated arch and passage dread.
Portals they passed, where deep within,
Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
And many an hideous engine grim,
For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
By artists formed, who deemed it shame
And sin to give their work a name.
They halted at a low-browed porch,
And Brent to Allan gave the torch,

While bolt and chain he backward rolled,
And made the bar unhasp its hold.
They entered :—'twas a prison-room
Of stern security and gloom,
Yet not a dungeon ; for the day
Through lofty gratings found its way,
And rude and antique garniture
Decked the sad walls and oaken floor ;
Such as the rugged days of old,
Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
"Here," said De Brent, "thou may'st remain
Till the Leach visit him again.
Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
To tend the noble prisoner well."—
Retiring then the bolt he drew,
And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.
Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
A Captive feebly raised his head ;
The wondering Minstrel looked, and knew
Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu !

For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
They, erring, deemed the Chief he sought.

XIII.

As the tall ship, whose lofty prore
Shall never stem the billows more,
Deserted by her gallant band,
Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
And oft his fevered limbs he threw
In toss abrupt, as when her sides
Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
Yet cannot heave her from her seat;—
O! how unlike her course on sea!
Or his free step on hill and lea!—
Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
—"What of thy lady?—of my clan?—
My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all!
Have they been ruined in my fall?

Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here!
Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear."—
(For Allan, who his mood well knew,
Was choked with grief and terror too.)—
"Who fought—who fled!—Old man, be brief;—
Some might—for they had lost their Chief.
Who basely live?—who bravely died?"—
"O, calm thee, Chief!" the Minstrel cried,
"Ellen is safe;"—"For that, thank heaven!"
"And hopes are for the Douglas given;—
The Lady Margaret too is well,
And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
Has never harp of minstrel told,
Of combat fought so true and bold.
Thy stately pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent."—

XIV.

The Chieftain reared his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;

But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequered his swarthy brow and cheeks.
—" Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,
With measure bold on festal day,
In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
That stirring air that peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then, (for well thou canst,)
Free from thy minstrel-spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
As if it soared from battle-fray."—
The trembling bard with awe obeyed,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;

But soon remembrance of the sight
He witnessed from the mountain's height,
With what old Bertram told at night,
Awakened the full power of song,
And bore him in career along ;—
As shallop launched on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV.

Battle of Beal' an Duine.

" The Minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Ben-venue,
For, ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch-Achray—
Where shall he find, in foreign land,
So lone a lake, so sweet a strand !—
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake,

Upon her eyrie nods the erne,
  The deer has sought the brake;
The small birds will not sing aloud,
  The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
  Benledi's distant hill.
Is it the thunder's solemn sound
  That mutters deep and dread,
Or echoes from the groaning ground
  The warriors' measured tread?
Is it the lightning's quivering glance
  That on the thicket streams,
Or do they flash on spear and lance
  The sun's retiring beams?
—I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
I see the Moray's silver star,
Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
That up the lake comes winding far!

To hero boune for battle-strife,
  Or bard of martial lay,
'Twere worth ten years of peaceful life,
  One glance at their array!

XVI.

" Their light-armed archers far and near
  Surveyed the tangled ground,
Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
  A twilight forest frowned,
Their barded horsemen, in the rear,
  The stern battalia crowned.
No cymbal clashed, no clarion rang,
  Still were the pipe and drum;
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
  The sullen march was dumb.
There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
  Or wave their flags abroad;
Scarce the frail aspen seemed to quake,
  That shadowed o'er their road.

Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
  Can rouse no lurking foe,
Nor spy a trace of living thing,
  Save when they stirred the roe;
The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
  High-swelling, dark, and slow.
The lake is passed, and now they gain
A narrow and a broken plain,
Before the Trosach's rugged jaws;
And here the horse and spear-men pause,
While, to explore the dangerous glen,
Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII.

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
Had pealed the banner-cry of hell!

Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
The archery appear:
For life! for life! their flight they ply—
And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
And plaids, and bonnets waving high,
And broad-swords flashing to the sky,
Are maddening in their rear.
Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
Pursuers and pursued;
Before that tide of flight and chase,
How shall it keep its rooted place,
The spearmen's twilight wood?
—'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
Bear back both friend and foe!'
Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
That serried grove of lances brown
At once lay levell'd low;
And closely shouldering side to side,
The bristling ranks the onset bide.—

—' We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
  As their Tinchel * cows the game!
They come as fleet as forest deer,
  We'll drive them back as tame.'—

XVIII.

" Bearing before them, in their course,
The relics of the archer force,
Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
  Above the tide, each broad-sword bright
  Was brandishing like beam of light,
    Each targe was dark below;
  And with the ocean's mighty swing,
  When heaving to the tempest's wing,
    They hurled them on the foe.

* A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding a great space, and gradually narrowing, brought immense quantities of deer together, which usually made desperate efforts to break through the *Tinchel*.

I heard the lance's shivering crash,
As when the whirl-wind rends the ash;
I heard the broad-swords deadly clang,
As if an hundred anvils rang!
But Moray wheeled his rear-ward rank
Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,—
—'My banner-man, advance!
I see,' he cried, 'their column shake.—
Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,
Upon them with the lance!'—
The horsemen dashed among the route,
As deer break through the broom;
Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
They soon make lightsome room.
Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
Where, where, was Roderick then!
One blast upon his bugle-horn
Were worth a thousand men.
And refluent through the pass of fear
The battle's tide was pour'd;

Vanished the Saxon's struggling spear,
  Vanished the mountain sword.
As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
  Receives her roaring linn,
As the dark caverns of the deep
  Suck the wild whirlpool in,
So did the deep and darksome pass
Devour the battle's mingled mass;
None linger now upon the plain,
Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX.

"Now westward rolls the battle's din,
That deep and doubling pass within.
—Minstrel, away! the work of fate
Is bearing on: its issue wait,
Where the rude Trosach's dread defile
Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
Grey Benvenue I soon repassed,
Loch-Katrine lay beneath me cast.

The sun is set ;—the clouds are met,
The lowering scowl of heaven
An inky hue of livid blue
To the deep lake has given ;
Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen
Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.
I heeded not the eddying surge,
Mine eye but saw the Trosach's gorge,
Mine ear but heard that sullen sound,
Which like an earth-quake shook the ground,
And spoke the stern and desperate strife
That parts not but with parting life,
Seeming, to minstrel-ear, to toll
The dirge of many a passing soul.
Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
The martial flood disgorged agen,
But not in mingled tide ;
The plaided warriors of the North
High on the mountain thunder forth,
And overhang its side ;

While by the lake below appears
The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
At weary bay each shattered band,
Eyeing their foemen, sternly stand;
Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
That flings its fragments to the gale,
And broken arms and disarray
Marked the fell havock of the day.

XX.

"Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
The Saxons stood in sullen trance,
Till Moray pointed with his lance,
And cried—'Behold yon isle!—
See! none are left to guard its strand,
But women weak, that wring the hand:
'Tis there of yore the robber band
Their booty wont to pile;—
My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
And loose a shallop from the shore.

Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.'—
Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
On earth his casque and corslet rung,
He plunged him in the wave:—
All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
And to their clamours Benvenue
A mingled echo gave;
The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
The helpless females scream for fear,
And yells for rage the mountaineer.
'Twas then, as by the outcry riven,
Poured down at once the lowering heaven;
A whirlwind swept Loch-Katrine's breast,
Her billows reared their snowy crest.
Well for the swimmer swelled they high,
To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
For round him showered, 'mid rain and hail,
The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
In vain.—He nears the isle—and lo!
His hand is on a shallop's bow.

—Just then a flash of lightning came,
It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
I marked Duncraggan's widowed dame,
Behind an oak I saw her stand,
A naked dirk gleamed in her hand:—
It darkened,—but amid the moan
Of waves I heard a dying groan;—
Another flash!—the spearman floats
A weltering corse beside the boats,
And the stern Matron o'er him stood,
Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI.

"Revenge! revenge!" the Saxons cried,
The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
Despite the elemental rage,
Again they hurried to engage;
But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
Bloody with spurring came a knight,
Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.

Clarion and trumpet by his side
Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
While, in the monarch's name, afar
An herald's voice forebade the war,
For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
Were both, he said, in captive hold."
—But here the lay made sudden stand,
The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!—
Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
How Roderick brooked his minstrelsy:
At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
Varied his look as changed the song;
At length, no more his deafened ear
The minstrel melody can hear;
His face grows sharp,—his hands are clenched,
As if some pang his heart-strings wrenched;
Set are his teeth, his fading eye
Is sternly fixed on vacancy;—

Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
His parting breath, stout Roderick Dhu!—
Old Allan-bane looked on aghast,
While grim and still his spirit passed;
But when he saw that life was fled,
He poured his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII.

Lament.

" And art thou cold, and lowly laid,
Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
Breadalbane's boast, Clan Alpine's shade!
For thee shall none a requiem say?
—For thee, who loved the minstrel's lay,
For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,
The shelter of her exiled line,
E'en in this prison-house of thine,
I'll wail for Alpine's honoured pine!

" What groans shall yonder vallies fill!
What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!

What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
Thy fall before the race was won,
Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
There breathes not clansman of thy line,
But would have given his life for thine.—
O woe for Alpine's honoured pine!

"Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
The captive thrush may brook the cage,
The prisoned eagle dies for rage.
Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
And, when its notes awake again,
Even she, so long beloved in vain,
Shall with my harp her voice combine,
And mix her woe and tears with mine,
To wail Clan-Alpine's honoured pine."—

XXIII.

Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
Remained in lordly bower apart,

Where played, with many-coloured gleams,
Through storied pane the rising beams.
In vain on gilded roof they fall,
And lighten'd up a tapestried wall,
And for her use a menial train
A rich collation spread in vain.
The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
Scarce drew one curious glance astray;
Or, if she looked, 'twas but to say,
With better omen dawned the day
In that lone isle, where waved on high
The dun deer's hide for canopy;
Where oft her noble father shared
The simple meal her care prepared,
While Lufra, crouching by her side,
Her station claimed with jealous pride,
And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
Whose answer, oft at random made,
The wandering of his thoughts betrayed.—

Those who such simple joys have known
Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
The window seeks with cautious tread.
What distant music has the power
To win her in this woeful hour!
'Twas from a turret that o'er-hung
Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV.

Lay of the imprisoned Huntsman.

"My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
My idle grey-hound loathes his food,
My horse is weary of his stall,
And I am sick of captive thrall.
I wish I were as I have been,
Hunting the hart in forests green,
With bended bow and blood-hound free,
For that's the life is meet for me.

I hate to learn the ebb of time,
From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
Or mark it as the sun-beams crawl,
Inch after inch, along the wall.
The lark was wont my matins ring,
The sable rook my vespers sing;
These towers, although a king's they be,
Have not a hall of joy for me.

" No more at dawning morn I rise,
And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
And homeward wend with evening dew;
A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
And lay my trophies at her feet,
While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
That life is lost to love and me!"——

XXV.

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
The list'ner had not turned her head,

It trickled still, the starting tear,
When light a footstep struck her ear,
And Snowdoun's graceful Knight was near.
She turned the hastier, lest again
The prisoner should renew his strain.
"O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
"How may an almost orphan maid
Pay the deep debt"——"O say not so!
To me no gratitude you owe.
Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
And bid thy noble father live;
I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
No tyrant he, though ire and pride
May lead his better mood aside.
Come, Ellen, come!—'tis more than time,
He holds his court at morning prime."—
With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
As to a brother's arm she clung.
Gently he dried the falling tear,
And gently whispered hope and cheer;

Her faultering steps half led, half staid,
Through gallery fair and high arcade,
Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI.

Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glowed on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And, from their tissue, fancy frames
Aerial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought, who owned this state,
The dreaded prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
Might well have ruled a royal court;

On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turned bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
To him each lady's look was lent,
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King!

XXVII.

As wreath of snow, on mountain breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
No word her choaking voice commands,—
She showed the ring,—she clasped her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous prince, that suppliant look!

Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
Checked with a glance the circle's smile;
Graceful, but grave, her brow he kissed,
And bade her terrors be dismissed:—
"Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
The fealty of Scotland claims.
To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
He will redeem his signet ring.
Ask nought for Douglas;—yester even,
His prince and he have much forgiven:
Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
We would not to the vulgar crowd
Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
Calmly we heard and judged his cause,
Our council aided, and our laws.
I stanched thy father's death-feud stern,
With stout De Vaux and grey Glencairn;
And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
The friend and bulwark of our Throne.—

But, lovely infidel, how now?
What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
Thou must confirm this doubting maid."—

XXVIII.

Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
And on his neck his daughter hung.
The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
When it can say, with godlike voice,
Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
Yet would not James the general eye
On nature's raptures long should pry;
He stepp'd between—"Nay, Douglas, nay,
Steal not my proselyte away!
The riddle 'tis my right to read,
That brought this happy chance to speed.—
Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
In life's more low but happier way,

'Tis under name which veils my power,
Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims,
And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
Then, in a tone apart and low,
—" Ah, little trait'ress ! none must know
What idle dream, what lighter thought,
What vanity full dearly bought,
Joined to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
In dangerous hour, and all but gave
Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive !"—
Aloud he spoke—" Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
What seeks fair Ellen of the King ?"——

XXIX.

Full well the conscious maiden guessed,
He probed the weakness of her breast;
But, with that consciousness, there came
A lightening of her fears for Græme,
And more she deemed the monarch's ire
Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire,
Rebellious broad-sword boldly drew;
And, to her generous feeling true,
She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.—
" Forbear thy suit:—the King of Kings
Alone can stay life's parting wings.
I know his heart, I know his hand,
Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand;—
My fairest earldom would I give
To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!—
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"—
Blushing, she turned her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SA

As if she wished her sire to speak
The suit that stained her glowing cheek.—
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.
Malcolm, come forth!"—And, at the word,
Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtured underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlawed man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name.—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!"——
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

HARP of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
  On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
  The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
  And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with Nature's vespers blending,
  With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing
      bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel Harp!
  Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
  May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
  Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawned wearier day,
  And bitterer was the grief devoured alone.
That I o'erlive such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
  Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'Tis now a Seraph bold, with touch of fire,
  'Tis now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
Receding now, the dying numbers ring
  Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
  A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 'tis silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!

END OF CANTO SIXTH.

NOTES.

NOTES TO CANTO FIRST.

Note I.

———*The heights of Uam-var,*
And round that cavern where 'tis told
A giant made his den of old.—St. I. p. 6.

Ua-var, as the name is pronounced, or more properly *Uaigh-mor*, is a mountain to the north-east of the village of Callender in Menteith, deriving its name, which signifies the great den, or cavern, from a sort of retreat among the rocks on the south side, said, by tradition, to have been the abode of a giant. In latter times, it was the refuge of robbers and banditti, who have been only extirpated within these forty or fifty years. Strictly speaking, this strong hold is not a cave, as the name would imply, but a sort of small inclosure, or recess, surrounded with large rocks, and open above head. It may have been originally designed as a toil for deer, who might get in from the outside, but would find it difficult to return. This opinion prevails among the old sportsmen and deer-stalkers in the neighbourhood.

Note II.

Two dogs of black St Hubert's breed,
Unmatched for courage, strength, and speed.—St. VII. p. 10.

"The hounds which we call Saint Hubert's hounds, are commonly all blacke, yet neuertheless, their race is so mingled at these days, that we find them of all colours. These are the hounds which the abbots of St Hubert haue always kept some of their race or kind, in honour or remembrance of the saint, which was a hunter with S. Eustace. Whereupon we may conceaue that (by the grace of God) all good huntsmen shall follow them into paradise. To returne vnto my former purpose, this kind of dogges hath beene dispersed thorough the countries of Henault, Lorayne, Flaunders, and Burgoyne. They are mighty of body, neuerthelesse their legges are low and short, likewise they are not swift, although they be very good of sent, hunting chaces which are farre straggled, fearing neither water nor cold, and doe more couet the chaces that smell, as foxes, bore, and such like, than other, because they find themselues neither of swiftnes nor courage to hunt and kill the chases that are lighter and swifter. The bloudhounds of this colour prooue good, especially those that are cole-blacke, but I make no great account to breede on them, or to keepe the kind, and yet I found a booke which a hunter did dedicate to a prince of Lorayne, which seemed to loue hunting much, wherein was a blason which the same hunter gaue to his bloodhound, called Souyllard, which was white:

My name came first from holy Hubert's race,
Souyllard my sire, a hound of singular grace.

Whereupon we may presume that some of the kind prooue white sometimes, but they are not of the kind of the Greffiers or Bouxes, which we haue at these dayes."—*The noble Art of Venerie or Hunting, translated and collected for the use of all Noblemen and Gentlemen.* Lond. 1611. 4. p. 15.

Note III.

For the death stroke, and death halloo,
Mustered his breath, his whinyard drew.—St. VIII. p. 11.

When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horns being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar, as the old rhyme testifies:

If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier,
But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal, therefore thou needst not fear.

At all times, however, the task was dangerous, and to be adventured upon wisely and warily, either by getting behind the stag while he was gazing on the hounds, or by watching an opportunity to gallop roundly in upon him, and kill him with the sword. See many directions to this purpose in the Booke

of Hunting, chap. 41. Wilson the historian has recorded a providential escape which befel him in this hazardous sport, while a youth and follower of the Earl of Essex.

"Sir Peter Lee, of Lime, in Cheshire, invited my lord one summer, to hunt the stagg. And having a great stagg in chace, and many gentlemen in the pursuit, the stagg took soyle. And divers, whereof I was one, alighted, and stood with swords drawne, to have a cut at him, at his coming out of the water. The staggs there being wonderfully fierce and dangerous, made us youths more eager to be at him. But he escaped us all. And it was my misfortune to be hindered of my coming nere him, the way being sliperie, by a fall; which gave occasion to some, who did not know mee, to speak as if I had falne for feare. Which being told me, I left the stagg, and followed the gentleman who [first] spake it. But I found him of that cold temper, that it seems his words made an escape from him; as by his denial and repentance it appeared. But this made mee more violent in pursuite of the stagg, to recover my reputation. And I happened to be the only horseman in, when the dogs sett him up at bay; and approaching nere him on horsebacke, hee broke through the dogs, and run at mee, and tore my horse's side with his hornes, close by my thigh. Then I quitted my horse, and grew more cunning (for the dogs had sette him up againe), stealing behind him with my sword, and cut his ham-strings; and then got upon his back, and cut his throate; which, as I was doing, the company came in, and bla-

med my rashness for running such a hazard."—PECK'S *Desiderata Curiosa*, II. 464.

Note IV.

And now to issue from the glen
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.—St. XIV. p. 17.

Until the present road was made through the romantic pass which I have presumptuously attempted to describe in the preceding stanzas, there was no mode of issuing out of the defile, called the Trosachs, excepting by a sort of ladder, composed of the branches and roots of the trees.

Note V.

To meet with highland plunderers here,
Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—St. XVI. p. 21.

The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighbourhood of Loch Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their lowland neighbours.

" In former times, those parts of this district, which are situated beyond the Grampian range, were rendered almost inaccessible, by strong barriers of rocks, and mountains, and lakes. It was a border country, and though on the very verge of the low country, it was almost totally sequestered from the world, and, as it were, insulated with respect to society.

“ ’Tis well known, that in the highlands, it was, in former times, accounted not only lawful, but honourable, among hostile tribes, to commit depredations on one another; and these habits of the age were perhaps strengthened in this district, by the circumstances which have been mentioned. It bordered on a country, the inhabitants of which, while they were richer, were less warlike than they, and widely differenced by language and manners.”—GRAHAM’S *Sketches of Scenery in Perthshire.* Edin. 1806, p. 97.

The reader will therefore be pleased to remember, that the the scene of this poem is laid in a time

> When tooming faulds, or sweeping of a glen,
> Had still been held the deed of gallant men.

Note VI.

A grey-haired sire, whose eye, intent,
Was on the visioned future bent.—St. XXIII. P. 28.

If force of evidence could authorise us to believe facts inconisten with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favour of the existence of the Second-Sight. It is called in Gaelic *Taishitaraugh*, from *Taish*, an unreal or shadowy appearance; and those possessed of the faculty are called *Taishatrin*, which may be aptly translated visionaries. Martin, a steady believer in the second-sight, gives the following account of it:

“ The second-sight is a singular faculty of seeing an otherwise

invisible object, without any previous means used by the person that uses it for that end; the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers, that they neither see, nor think of any thing else, except the vision, as long as it continues; and then they appear pensive or jovial, according to the object which was represented to them.

"At the sight of a vision, the eye-lids of the person are erected, and the eyes continue staring until the object vanish. This is obvious to others who are by, when the persons happen to see a vision, and occurred more than once to my own observation, and to others that were with me.

"There is one in Skie, of whom his acquaintance observed, that when he sees a vision, the inner part of his eye-lids turns so far upwards, that after the object disappears, he must draw them down with his fingers, and sometimes employs others to draw them down, which he finds to be the much easier way.

"This faculty of the second-sight does not lineally descend in a family, as some imagine, for I know several parents who are endowed with it, but their children not, and *vice versa*: neither is it acquired by any previous compact. And, after a strict enquiry, I could never learn that this faculty was communicable any way whatsoever.

"The seer knows neither the object, time, nor place of a vision, before it appears; and the same object is often seen by different persons, living at a considerable distance from one another. The true way of judging as to the time and circumstance of an object, is by observation; for several persons of

judgment, without this faculty, are more capable to judge of the design of a vision, than a novice that is a seer. If an object appear in the day or night, it will come to pass sooner or later accordingly.

"If an object is seen early in the morning (which is not frequent,) it will be accomplished in a few hours afterwards. If at noon, it will commonly be accomplished that very day. If in the evening, perhaps that night; if after candles be lighted, it will be accomplished that night: the later always in accomplishment, by weeks, months, and sometimes years, according to the time of night the vision is seen.

"When a shroud is perceived about one, it is a sure prognostick of death: the time is judged according to the height of it about the person; for if it is seen above the middle, death is not to be expected for the space of a year, and perhaps some months longer; and as it is frequently seen to ascend higher towards the head, death is concluded to be at hand within a few days, if not hours, as daily experience confirms. Examples of this kind were shewn me, when the persons of whom the observations were then made, enjoyed perfect health.

"One instance was lately foretold by a seer that was a novice, concerning the death of one of my acquaintance; this was communicated to a few only, and with great confidence: I being one of the number, did not in the least regard it, until the death of the person, about the time foretold, did confirm me of the certainty of the prediction. The novice mentioned above, is now a skilfull seer, as appears from many late instan-

ces; he lives in the parish of St Mary's, the most northern in Skie.

"If a woman is seen standing at a man's left hand, it is a presage that she will be his wife, whether they be married to others, or unmarried, at the time of the apparition.

"If two or three women are seen at once near a man's left hand, she that is next him will undoubtedly be his wife first, and so on, whether all three, or the man, be single or married at the time of the vision or not; of which there are several late instances among those of my acquaintance. It is an ordinary thing for them to see a man that is to come to the house shortly after; and if he is not of the seer's acquaintance, yet he gives such a lively description of his stature, complexion, habit, &c. that upon his arrival he answers the character given him in all respects.

"If the person so appearing be one of the seer's acquaintance, he will tell his name, as well as other particulars; and he can tell by his countenance whether he comes in a good or bad humour.

"I have been seen thus myself by seers of both sexes, at some hundred miles distance; some that saw me in this manner had never seen me personally, and it happened according to their visions, without any previous design of mine to go to those places, my coming there being purely accidental.

"It is ordinary with them to see houses, gardens, and trees in places void of all three; and this in progress of time uses to be accomplished: as at Mogshot, in the Isle of Skie, where

there were but a few sorry cow-houses, thatched with straw, yet in a very few years after, the vision, which appeared often, was accomplished, by the building of several good houses on the very spot represented by the seers, and by the planting of orchards there.

"To see a spark of fire fall upon one's arm or breast, is a forerunner of a dead child to be seen in the arms of those persons; of which there are several fresh instances.

"To see a seat empty at the time of one's sitting in it, is a presage of that person's death soon after.

"When a novice, or one that has lately obtained the second-sight, sees a vision in the night-time without doors, and comes near a fire, he presently falls into a swoon.

"Some find themselves as it were in a crowd of people, having a corpse which they carry along with them; and after such visions the seers come in sweating, and describe the people that appeared: if there be any of their acquaintance among 'em, they give an account of their names, as also of the bearers, but they know nothing concerning the corpse.

"All those who have the second-sight do not always see these visions at once, though they be together at the time. But if one who has this faculty, designedly touch his fellow-seer at the instant of a vision's appearing, then the second sees it as well as the first: and this is sometimes discerned by those that are near them on such occasions."—MARTIN'S *Description of the Western Islands*, 1716, 8vo. p. 300, *et seq.*

To these particulars innumerable examples might be added,

all attested by grave and credible authors. But in despite of evidence, which neither Bacon, Boyle, nor Johnson were able to resist, the *Taisch*, with all its visionary properties, seems to be now universally abandoned to the use of poetry. The exquisitely beautiful poem of Lochiel will at once occur to the recollection of every reader.

Note VII.

There, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.—St. XXVI. p. 31.

The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut in a strong and secluded situation. One of these last gave refuge to the unfortunate Charles Edward, in his perilous wanderings after the battle of Culloden.

"It was situated in the face of a very rough, high, and rocky mountain, called Letternilichk, still a part of Benalder, full of great stones and crevices, and some scattered wood interspersed. The habitation called the Cage, in the face of that mountain, was within a small thick bush of wood. There were first some rows of trees laid down, in order to level a floor for a habitation; and as the place was steep, this raised the lower side to an equal height with the other; and these trees, in the way of joists or planks, were levelled with earth and gravel. There were betwixt the trees, growing naturally on their own roots,

some stakes fixed in the earth, which, with the trees, were interwoven with ropes, made of heath and birch twigs, up to the top of the Cage, it being of a round or rather oval shape; and the whole thatched and covered over with fog. The whole fabric hung, as it were, by a large tree, which reclined from the one end, all along the roof, to the other, and which gave it the name of the Cage; and by chance there happened to be two stones at a small distance from one another, in the side next the precipice, resembling the pillars of a chimney, where the fire was placed. The smoke had its vent out here, all along the fall of the rock, which was so much of the same colour, that one could discover no difference in the clearest day."—HOME'S *History of the Rebellion*, Lond. 1802. 4to. p. 381.

Note VIII.

My sire's tall form might grace the part
Of Ferragus or Ascabart.—St. XXVIII. p. 35.

These two sons of Anak flourished in romantic fable. The first is well known to the admirers of Ariosto, by the name of Ferrau. He was an antagonist of Orlando, and was at length slain by him in single combat. There is a romance in the Auchinleck MS., in which Ferragus is thus described:

"On a day come tiding
Unto Charls the King,
Al of a doughti knight
Was comen to Navers,
Stout he was and fers,
Veruagu he hight.

Of Babiloun the soudan
Thider him sende gan,
With King Charls to fight.
So hard he was to-fond [1]
That no dint of brond
No greued him, aplight.

He hadde twenti men strengthe,
And fourti fet of lengthe,
Thilke painim hede,[2]
And four fet in the face,
Y-meten[3] in the place,
And fiften in brede.[4]
His nose was a fot and more;
His brow, as brestles wore; [5]
He that it seighe it sede.
He loked lotheliche,
And was swart[6] as any piche,
Of him men might adrede."

Romance of Charlemagne, l. 461-484. *Auchinleck MS.* fol. 265.

Ascapart, or Ascabart, makes a very material figure in the History of Bevis of Hampton, by whom he was conquered. His effigies may be seen guarding one side of a gate at Southampton, while the other is occupied by Sir Bevis himself. The dimensions of Ascapart were little inferior to those of Ferragus, if the following description be correct:

" They metten with a geaunt,
With a lotheliche semblaunt.

---

[1] *Found, proved.* [2] *Had.* [3] *Measured.* [4] *Breadth.* [5] *Were.* [6] *Black.*

He was wonderliche strong,
Rome [1] thretti fote long.
His berd was bot gret and rowe ; [2]
A space of a fot betweene is [3] browe;
His clob was, to yeue [4] a strok,
A lite bodi of an ok.[5]
Beues hadde of him wonder gret,
And askede him what a het,[6]
And yaf [7] men of his contrè
Were ase meche [8] ase was he.
'Me name,' a sede,[9] 'is Ascopard
Garci me sent hiderward,
For to bring this quene ayen,
And thè Beues her of-slen.[10]
Icham Garci is [11] champioun,
And was i-driue out of me [12] toun
Al for that ich was so lite.[13]
Eueri man me wolde smite,
Ich was so lite and so merugh,[14]
Eueri man me clepede dwerugh.[15]
And now icham in this londe,
I wax mor [16] ich understonde,
And strengere than other tene ; [17]
And that schel on us be sene.

Sir Bevis of Hampton, l. 2512. *Auchinleck MS.* fol. 189.

Note IX.

Though all unasked his birth or name.—St. XXIX. p. 35.

The highlanders, who carried hospitality to a punctilious excess, are said to have considered it as churlish, to ask a stran-

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[1] *Fully.* [2] *Rough.* [3] *His.* [4] *Give.* [5] *The stem of a little oak tree.* [6] *He hight, was called.* [7] *If.* [8] *Great.* [9] *He said.* [10] *Slay.* [11] *His.* [12] *My.* [13] *Little.* [14] *Lean.* [15] *Dwarf.* [16] *Greater, taller.* [17] *Ten.*

ger his name or lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would, in many cases, have produced the discovery of some circumstance, which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.

Note X.

——— *And still a harp unseen,*
Filled up the symphony between.—St. XXX. p. 36.

" They (meaning the highlanders) delight much in musicke, but chiefly in harps and clairschoes of their own fashion. The strings of the clairschoes are made of brasse-wire, and the strings of the harps of sinews; which strings they strike either with their nayles, growing long, or else with an instrument appointed for that use. They take great pleasure to decke their harps and clairschoes with silver and precious stones; the poore ones, that cannot attayne hereunto, decke them with christall. They sing verses prettily compound, contayning (for the most part) prayses of valiant men. There is not almost any other argument, whereof their rhymes intreat. They speak the ancient French language, altered a little." *—" The harp and clairschoes are now only heard of in the highlands in ancient song. At what period these instruments ceased to be used, is not on record; and tradition is silent on this head.

* Vide " Certeyne Matters concerning the Realme of Scotland, &c, as they were Anno Domini 1597. Lond. 1603." 4to.

But, as Irish harpers occasionally visited the highlands and western isles till lately, the harp might have been extant so late as the middle of the present century. Thus far we know, that from remote times down to the present, harpers were received as welcome guests, particularly in the highlands of Scotland; and so late as the latter end of the sixteenth century, as appears by the above quotation, the harp was in common use among the natives of the western isles. How it happened that the noisy and inharmonious bagpipe banished the soft and expressive harp, we cannot say; but certain it is, that the bagpipe is now the only instrument that obtains universally in the highland districts."—CAMPBELL'S *Journey through North Britain.* Lond. 1808. 4to. I. 175.

Mr Gunn, of Edinburgh, has lately published a curious essay upon the harp and harp music of the Highlands of Scotland. That the instrument was once in common use there, is most certain. Cleland numbers an acquaintance with it among the few accomplishments which his satire allows to the Highlanders;—

In nothing they're accounted sharp,
Except in bag-pipe or in harp.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

Nŏte I.

Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey.—St. I. p. 47.

That Highland chieftains, to a late period, retained in their service the bard, as a family officer, admits of very easy proof. The author of the Letters from Scotland, an officer of engineers, quartered at Inverness about 1720, who certainly cannot be deemed a favourable witness, gives the following account of the office, and of a bard, whom he heard exercise his talent of recitation.

"The bard is skilled in the genealogy of all the highland families, sometimes preceptor to the young laird, celebrates in Irish verse the original of the tribe, the famous warlike actions of the successive heads, and sings his own lyrics as an opiate to the chief, when indisposed for sleep; but poets are not equally esteemed and honoured in all countries. I happened to be a witness of the dishonour done to the muse, at the house of one of the chiefs, where two of these bards were set at a good distance, at the lower end of a long table, with a par-

cel of highlanders of no extraordinary appearance, over a cup of ale. Poor inspiration!

"They were not asked to drink a glass of wine at our table, though the whole company consisted only of the *great man*, one of his near relations, and myself.

"After some little time, the chief ordered one of them to sing me a highland song. The bard readily obeyed, and with a hoarse voice, and in a tone of few various notes, began, as I was told, one of his own lyrics; and when he had proceeded to the fourth or fifth stanza, I perceived, by the names of several persons, glens, and mountains, which I had known or heard of before, that it was an account of some clan battle. But in his going on, the chief (who piques himself upon his school-learning) at some particular passage, bid him cease, and cryed out, 'There's nothing like that in Virgil or Homer.' I bowed, and told him I believed so. This you may believe was very edifying and delightful."—*Letters from Scotland*, II. 167.

Note II.

——— *The Græme.*—St. VI. p. 53.

The ancient and powerful family of Graham (which, for metrical reasons, is here spelled after the Scottish pronunciation,) held extensive possessions in the counties of Dunbarton and Stirling. Few families can boast of more historical renown, having claim to three of the most remarkable characters in the Scottish annals. Sir John the Græme, the faithful and undaunted partaker of the labours and patriotic warfare of Wal-

lace, fell in the unfortunate field of Falkirk, in 1298. The celebrated Marquis of Montrose, in whom De Retz saw realized his abstract idea of the heroes of antiquity, was the second of these worthies. And, notwithstanding the severity of his temper, and the rigour with which he executed the oppressive mandates of the prince whom he served, I do not hesitate to name as the third, John Grahame, of Claverhouse, Viscount of Dundee, whose heroic death, in the arms of victory, may be allowed to cancel the memory of his cruelty to the non-conformists, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II.

Note III.

This harp which erst Saint Modan swayed.—St. VI. p. 54.

I am not prepared to shew that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment; for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which, retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound. "But labouring once in these mechanic arts for a devoute matrone that had sett him on worke, his violl, that hung by him on the wall, of its owne accord, without anie man's helpe, distinctly sounded this anthime: *Gaudent in cœlis animæ sanctorum qui Christi vestigia sunt secuti: et quia pro eius amore sanguinem suum fuderunt, ideo cum Christo gaudent æternum.* Whereat all the companie being much astonished, turned their eyes from behoulding him working, to looke on that strange accident." - - - "Not long after, manie

of the court, that hitherunto had born a kind of fayned friendship towards him, began now greatly to envie at his progresse and rising in goodness, using manie crooked, backbiting meanes to deffame his vertues with the black markes of hypocrisie. And the better to authorise their calumnie, they brought in this that happened in the violl, affirming it to have been done by art magick. What more? this wicked rumour encreased dayly, till the king and others of the nobility taking hould thereof, Dunstan grew odious in their sight. Therefore he resolued to leaue the court, and go to Elphegus, surnamed the Bald, then bishop of Winchester, who was his cozen. Which his enemies understanding, they layd wayte for him in the way, and hauing throwne him off his horse, beate him, and draged him in the durt in the most miserable manner, meaning to haue slaine him, had not a companie of mastiue dogges, that came unlookt uppon them, defended and redeemed him from their crueltie. When with sorrow he was ashamed to see dogges more humane than they. And giuing thankes to Almightie God, he sensibly againe perceaued that the tunes of his violl had giuen him a warning of future accidents."—*Flower of the Lives of the most renowned Saincts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, by the* R. FATHER HIEROME PORTER. Doway, 1632. 4to. tome I. p. 438.

The same supernatural circumstance is alluded to by the anonymous author of "Grim, the Collier of Croydon."

" ———— [*Dunstan's harp sounds on the wall.*]
Forrest. Hark, hark, my lord, the holy abbot's harp
Sounds by itself so hanging on the wall!

Dunstan. Unhallowed man, that scorn'st the sacred read,
Hark, how the testimony of my truth
Sounds heavenly music with an angel's hand,
To testify Dunstan's integrity,
And prove thy active boast of no effect."

Note IV.

Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,

Were exiled from their native heaven.—St. VIII. p. 55.

The downfal of the Douglasses of the house of Angus, during the reign of James V., is the event alluded to in the text. The Earl of Angus, it will be remembered, had married the queen-dowager, and availed himself of the right which he thus acquired, as well as of his extensive power, to retain the king in a sort of tutelage, which approached very near to captivity. Several open attempts were made to rescue James from this thraldom, with which he was well known to be deeply disgusted; but the valour of the Douglasses, and their allies, gave them the victory in every conflict. At length, the king, while residing at Falkland, contrived to escape by night out of his own court and palace, and rode full speed to Stirling Castle, where the governor, who was of the opposite faction, joyfully received him. Being thus at liberty, James speedily summoned around him such peers as he knew to be most inimical to the domination of Angus, and laid his complaint before them, says Pitscottie, "with great lamentations: showing to them how he was holden in subjection, thir years bygone, by the Earl of Angus, and his kin and friends, who oppressed the whole coun-

try, and spoiled it, under the pretence of justice and his authority; and had slain many of his lieges, kinsmen, and friends, because they would have had it mended at their hands, and put him at liberty, as he ought to have been, at the council of his whole lords, and not have been subjected and corrected with no particular men, by the rest of his nobles: Therefore, said he, I desire, my lords, that I may be satisfied of the said earl, his kin, and friends; for I avow, that Scotland shall not hold us both, while (*i. e. till*) I be revenged on him and his.

"The lords hearing the king's complaint and lamentation, and also the great rage, fury, and malice, that he bure toward the Earl of Angus, his kin and friends, they concluded all, and thought it best, that he should be summoned to underly the law; if he fand not caution, nor yet compear himself, that he should be put to the horn, with all his kin and friends, so many as were contained in the letters. And further, the lords ordained, by advice of his majesty, that his brother and friends should be summoned to find caution to underly the law within a certain day, or else be put to the horn. But the earl appeared not, nor none for him; and so he was put to the horn, with all his kin and friends; so many as were contained in the summons, that compeared not, were banished, and holden traitors to the king."—*Lindsay of Pitscottie's History of Scotland.* Edinburgh, fol. p. 142.

Note V.

In Holy-Rood a knight he slew.—St. XII. p. 59.

This was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the court of Scotland; nay, the presence of the sovereign himself scarcely restrained the ferocious and inveterate feuds which were the perpetual source of bloodshed among the Scottish nobility. The following instance of the murder of Sir George Stuart of Ochiltree, called *The Bloody*, by the celebrated Francis Earl of Bothwell, may be produced among many; but, as the offence given in the royal court will hardly bear a vernacular translation, I shall leave the story in Johnstone's Latin, referring for further particulars to the naked simplicity of Birrel's Diary, 30th July, 1583.

"*Mors improbi hominis non tam ipsa immerita, quam pessimo exemplo in publicum fœdè perpetrata. Gulielmus Stuartus Alkiltrius, Arani frater, naturâ ac moribus, cujus sæpius memini, vulgo propter sitim sanguinis* sanguinarius *dictus, à Bothvelio, in Sanctæ Crucis Regiâ, exardescente irâ, mendacii probro lacessitus, obscænum osculum liberius retorquebat; Bothvelius hanc contumeliam tacitus tulit, sed ingentem irarum molem animo concepit. Utrinque postridie Edinburgi conventum, totidem numero comitibus armatis, præsidii causa, et acriter pugnatum est; cæteris amicis et clientibus metu torpentibus, aut vi absterritis, ipse Stuartus fortissimè dimicat, tandem excusso gladio à Bothvelio, Scythicâ feritate transfoditur, sine cujusquam misericordiâ; habuit itaque quem debuit exitum. Dig-*

nus erat Stuartus qui pateretur; Bothvelius qui faceret. Vulgus sanguinem sanguine prædicabat, et horum cruore innocuorum manibus egregiè parentatum."—R. JOHNSTONI *Historia Rerum Britannicarum*, ab anno 1572, ad annum 1628. Amstelodami, 1655, fol. p. 135.

Note VI.

The Douglas like a stricken deer,
Disowned by every noble peer.—St. XII. p. 60.

The exiled state of this powerful race is not exaggerated in this and subsequent passages. The hatred of James against the race of Douglas was so inveterate, that numerous as their allies were, and disregarded as the regal authority had usually been in similar cases, their nearest friends, even in the most remote parts of Scotland, durst not entertain them, unless under the strictest and closest disguise. James Douglas, son of the banished Earl of Angus, afterwards well known by the title of Earl of Morton, lurked, during the exile of his family, in the north of Scotland, under the assumed name of James Innes, otherwise *James the Grieve*, (i. e. Reve or Bailiff.) "And as he bore the name," says Godscroft, "so did he also execute the office of a grieve or overseer of the lands and rents, the corn and cattle of him, with whom he lived." From the habits of frugality and observation, which he acquired in this humble situation, the historian traces that intimate acquaintance with popular character, which enabled him to rise so high in the state, and that honourable economy by which he repaired and

established the shattered estates of Angus and Morton.—*History of the House of Douglas.* Edinburgh, 1743, Vol. II. p. 160.

Note VII.

Maronnan's cell.—St. XIII. p. 61.

The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch-Lomond, derives its name from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronoch, or Marnoch, or Maronan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered. There is a fountain devoted to him in the same parish, but its virtues, like the merits of its patron, have fallen into oblivion.

Note VIII.

Bracklinn's thundering wave.—St. XIV. p. 62.

This is a beautiful cascade made at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, by a mountain stream called the Keltie, about a mile from the village of Callander, in Menteith. Above a chasm where the brook precipitates itself from a height of at least fifty feet, there is thrown, for the convenience of the neighbourhood, a rustic foot-bridge, of about three feet in breadth, and without ledges, which is scarcely to be crossed by a stranger without awe and apprehension.

Note IX.

For Tine-man forged by fairy lore.—St. XV. p. 64.

Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas, was so unfortunate in

all his enterprizes, that he acquired the epithet of TINEMAN, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought. He was vanquished, as every reader must remember, in the bloody battle of Homildon-hill, near Wooler, where he himself lost an eye, and was made prisoner by Hotspur. He was no less unfortunate when allied with Percy, being wounded and taken at the battle of Shrewsbury. He was so unsuccessful in an attempt to besiege Roxburgh Castle, that it was called the *Foul Raid*, or disgraceful expedition. His ill fortune left him indeed at the battle of Beaugé, in France; but it was only to return with double emphasis at the subsequent action of Vernoil, the last and most unlucky of his encounters, in which he fell, with the flower of the Scottish chivalry, then serving as auxiliaries in France, and about two thousand common soldiers, A. D. 1424.

Note X.

Did, self-unscabbarded, fore-show
The footstep of a secret foe.—St. XV. p. 64.

The ancient warriors, whose hope and confidence rested chiefly in their blades, were accustomed to deduce omens from them, especially from such as were supposed to have been fabricated by enchanted skill, of which we have various instances in the romances and legends of the time. The wonderful sword SKOFFNUNG, wielded by the celebrated Hrolf Kraka, was of this description. It was deposited in the tomb of the monarch at his death, and taken from thence by Skeggo, a ce-

lebrated pirate, who bestowed it upon his son-in-law, Kormak, with the following curious directions: "The manner of using it will appear strange to you. A small bag is attached to it, which take heed not to violate. Let not the rays of the sun touch the upper part of the handle, nor unsheath it, unless thou art ready for battle. But when thou comest to the place of fight, go aside from the rest, grasp and extend the sword, and breathe upon it. Then a small worm will creep out of the handle: lower the handle, that he may more easily return into it.' Kormak, after having received the sword, returned home to his mother. He shewed the sword, and attempted to draw it, as unnecessarily as ineffectually, for he could not pluck it out of the sheath. His mother, Della, exclaimed, 'Do not despise the counsel given to thee, my son.' Kormak, however, repeating his efforts, pressed down the handle with his feet, and tore off the bag, when Skoffnung emitted a hollow groan: but still he could not unsheathe the sword. Kormak then went out with Bessus, whom he had challenged to fight with him, and drew apart at the place of combat. He sat down upon the ground, and ungirding the sword, which he bore above his vestments, did not remember to shield the hilt from the rays of the sun. In vain he endeavoured to draw it, till he placed his foot against the hilt; then the worm issued from it. But Kormak did not rightly handle the weapon, in consequence whereof, good fortune deserted it. As he unsheathed Skoffnung, it emitted a hollow murmur."—*Bartholini*

de Causis Contemptæ a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis Libri Tres. Hafniæ, 1689. 4to. p. 574.

To the history of this sentient and prescient weapon, I beg leave to add, from memory, the following legend, for which I cannot produce any better authority. A young nobleman, of high hopes and fortune, chanced to lose his way in the town which he inhabited, the capital, if I mistake not, of a German province. He had accidentally involved himself among the narrow and winding streets of a suburb, inhabited by the lowest order of the people, and an approaching thunder-shower determined him to ask a short refuge in the most decent habitation that was near him. He knocked at the door, which was opened by a tall man, of a grisly and ferocious aspect, and sordid dress. The stranger was readily ushered to a chamber, where swords, scourges, and machines, which seemed to be implements of torture, were suspended on the wall. One of these swords dropped from its scabbard, as the nobleman, after a moment's hesitation, crossed the threshold. His host immediately stared at him, with such a marked expression, that the young man could not help demanding his name and business, and the meaning of his looking at him so fixedly. "I am," answered the man, "the public executioner of this city; and the incident you have observed is a sure augury, that I shall, in discharge of my duty, one day cut off your head with the weapon which has just now spontaneously unsheathed itself." The nobleman lost no time in leaving his place of refuge; but, engaging in some of the plots of the

period, was shortly after decapitated by that very man and instrument.

Lord Lovat is said, by the author of the Letters from Scotland, to have affirmed, that a number of swords that hung up in the hall of the mansion-house, leaped of themselves out of the scabbard at the instant he was born. This story passed current among his clan, but, like that of the story I have just quoted, proved an unfortunate omen.—*Letters from Scotland*, Vol. II. p. 214.

Note XI.

——— *The pibroch proud.*—St. XVII. p. 67.

The connoisseurs in pipe-music affect to discover, in a well-composed pibroch, the imitative sounds of march, conflict, flight, pursuit, and all the " current of a heady fight." To this opinion, Dr Beattie has given his suffrage in the following elegant passage:—" A *pibroch* is a species of tune peculiar, I think, to the Highlands and western isles of Scotland. It is performed on a bagpipe, and differs totally from all other music. Its rythm is so irregular, and its notes, especially in the quick movement, so mixed and huddled together, that a stranger finds it impossible to reconcile his ear to it, so as to perceive its modulation. Some of these pibrochs, being intended to represent a battle, begin with a grave motion, resembling a march; then gradually quicken into the onset; run off with noisy confusion, and turbulent rapidity, to imitate the conflict

and pursuit; then swell into a few flourishes of triumphant joy; and perhaps close with the wild and slow wailings of a funeral procession."—*Essay on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition*, Chap. III. *Note.*

Note XII.

Roderigh vich Alpine Dhu, ho! ieroe!—St. XIX. p. 69.

Besides his ordinary name and surname, which were chiefly used in his intercourse with the Lowlands, every Highland chief had an epithet expressive of his patriarchal dignity as head of the clan, and which was common to all his predecessors and successors, as Pharoah to the kings of Egypt, or Arsaces to those of Parthia. This name was usually a patronymic, expressive of his descent from the founder of the family. Thus the Duke of Argyle is called MacCallanmore, or the *Son of Colin the Great.* Sometimes, however, it is derived from armorial distinctions, or the memory of some great feat: thus Lord Seaforth, as chief of the Mackenzies, or Clan-Kennet, bears the epithet of Caber-fae, or *Buck's Head*, as representative of Colin Fitzgerald, founder of the family, who saved the Scottish king, when endangered by a stag. But besides this title, which belonged to his office and dignity, the chieftain had usually another peculiar to himself, which distinguished him from the chieftains of the same race. This was sometimes derived from complexion, as *dhu* or *roy*; sometimes from size, as *beg* or *more*; at other times, from some particular exploit,

or from some peculiarity of habit or appearance. The line of the text therefore signifies,

Black Roderick, the descendant of Alpine.

The song itself is intended as an imitation of the *jorrams*, or boat-songs of the Highlanders, which were usually composed in honour of a favourite chief. They are so adapted as to keep time with the sweep of the oars, and it is easy to distinguish between those intended to be sung to the oars of a galley, where the stroke is lengthened and doubled as it were, and those which were timed to the rowers of an ordinary boat.

Note XIII.

The best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.—St. XX. p. 70.

The Lennox, as the district is called which encircles the lower extremity of Loch-Lomond, was peculiarly exposed to the incursions of the mountaineers, who inhabited the inaccessible fastnesses at the upper end of the lake, and the neighbouring district of Loch Katrine. These were often marked by circumstances of great ferocity, of which the noted conflict of Glen-fruin is a celebrated instance. This was a clan-battle, in which the Macgregors, headed by Allaster Macgregor, chief of the clan, encountered the sept of Colquhouns, commanded by Sir Humphry Colquhoun of Luss. It is on all hands allowed, that the action was desperately fought, and that the Colquhouns were defeated with slaughter, leaving two hundred of their name dead upon the field. But popular tradition has

added other horrors to the tale. It is said, that Sir Humphry Colquhoun, who was on horseback, escaped to the castle of Benechra, or Banochar, and was next day dragged out and murdered by the victorious Macgregors in cold blood. Buchanan of Auchmar, however, speaks of his slaughter as a subsequent event, and as perpetrated by the Macfarlanes. Again it is reported, that the Macgregors murdered a number of youths, whom report of the intended battle had brought to be spectators, and whom the Colquhouns, anxious for their safety, had shut up in a barn to be out of danger. One account of the Macgregors denies this circumstance entirely: another ascribes it to the savage and blood-thirsty disposition of a single individual, the bastard brother of the laird of Macgregor, who amused himself with this second massacre of the innocents, in express disobedience to the chief, by whom he was left their guardian during the pursuit of the Colquhouns. It is added, that Macgregor bitterly lamented this atrocious action, and prophesied the ruin which it must bring upon their ancient clan. The following account of the conflict, which is indeed drawn up by a friend of the clan Gregor, is altogether silent on the murder of the youths. "In the spring of the year 1602, there happened great dissentions and troubles between the laird of Luss, chief of the Colquhouns, and Alexander, laird of Macgregor. The original of these quarrels proceeded from injuries and provocations mutually given and received, not long before. Macgregor, however, wanting to have them ended in friendly conferences, marched at the head of two hundred of his clan,

to Leven, which borders on Luss, his country, with a view of settling matters by the mediation of friends: but Luss had no such intentions, and projected his measures with a different view; for he privately drew together a body of 300 horse and 500 foot, composed partly of his own clan and their followers, and partly of the Buchanans, his neighbours, and resolved to cut off Macgregor and his party to a man, in case the issue of the conference did not answer his inclination. But matters fell otherways than he expected; and though Macgregor had previous information of his insidious design, yet, dissembling his resentment, he kept the appointment, and parted good friends in appearance.

"No sooner was he gone, than Luss, thinking to surprise him and his party in full security, and without any dread or apprehension of his treachery, followed with all speed, and came up with him at a place called Glenfroon. Macgregor, upon the alarm, divided his men into two parties, the greatest part whereof he commanded himself, and the other he committed to the care of his brother John, who, by his orders, led them about another way, and attacked the Colquhouns in flank. Here, it was fought with great bravery on both sides for a considerable time; and, notwithstanding the vast disproportion of numbers, Macgregor, in the end, obtained an absolute victory. So great was the rout, that 200 of the Colquhouns were left dead upon the spot, most of the leading men were killed, and a multitude of prisoners taken. But what seemed most surprising and incredible in this defeat, was, that none of the

Macgregors were missing, except John, the laird's brother, and one common fellow, though indeed many of them were wounded."—Professor Ross's *History of the Family of Sutherland*, 1631.

The consequences of the battle of Glen-fruin were very calamitous to the family of Macgregor, who had already been considered as an unruly clan. The widows of the slain Colquhouns, sixty, it is said, in number, appeared in doleful procession before the king at Stirling, each riding upon a white palfrey, and bearing in her hand the bloody shirt of her husband displayed upon a pike. James VI. was so much moved by the complaints of this "choir of mourning dames," that he let loose his vengeance against the Macgregors, without either bounds or moderation. The very name of the clan was proscribed, and those by whom it had been borne were given up to sword and fire, and absolutely hunted down by bloodhounds like wild beasts. Argyle and the Campbells, on the one hand, Montrose, with the Grahames and Buchanans, on the other, are said to have been the chief instruments in suppressing this devoted clan. The laird of Macgregor surrendered to the former, on condition, that he would take him out of Scottish ground. But, to use Birrel's expression, he kept "a Highlandman's promise;" and, although he fulfilled his word to the letter, by carrying him as far as Berwick, he afterwards brought him back to Edinburgh, where he was executed with eighteen of his clan.—BIRREL's *Diary*, 2d Oct. 1603. The clan Gregor being thus driven to utter despair, seem to have renounced

the laws from the benefit of which they were excluded, and their depredations produced new acts of council, confirming the severity of their proscription, which had only the effect of rendering them still more united and desperate. It is a most extraordinary proof of the ardent and invincible spirit of clanship, that, notwithstanding the repeated proscriptions providently ordained by the legislature, "for the *timeous preventing* the disorders and oppression that may fall out by the said name and clan of Macgregors, and their followers," they were, 1715 and 1745, in a potent clan, and continue to subsist as a distinct and numerous race.

Note XIV.

———*The king's vindictive pride*

Boasts to have tamed the Border side.—St. XXVIII. p. 81.

In 1529, James V. made a convention at Edinburgh, for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority, and the troubles which followed, had committed many exorbitancies. Accordingly he assembled a flying army of ten thousand men, consisting of his principal nobility and their followers, who were directed to bring their hawks and dogs with them, that the monarch might refresh himself with sport during the interval of military execution. With this array he swept through Ettrick forest, where he hanged over the gate of his own castle, Piers Cockburn of Henderland, who had prepared, according to tradition, a feast for his reception. He caused Adam Scott

of Tushielaw also to be executed, who was distinguished by the title of King of the Border. But the most noted victim of justice, during that expedition, was John Armstrong of Gilnockie, famous in Scottish song, who, confiding in his own supposed innocence, met the king, with a retinue of thirty-six persons, all of whom were hanged at Carlenrig, near the source of the Teviot. The effect of this severity was such, that, as the vulgar expressed it, "the rush-bush kept the cow," and "thereafter was great peace and rest a long time, wherethrough the king had great profit; for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettricke forest in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the king as good count of them as they had gone in the bounds of Fife."—*Pitscottie's History*, p. 153.

Note XV.

What grace for Highland chiefs judge ye,
By fate of Border chivalry.—St. XXVIII. p. 82.

James was, in fact, equally attentive to restrain rapine and feudal oppression in every part of his dominions. "The king past to the isles, and there held justice courts, and punished both thief and traitor according to their demerit. And also he caused great men to show their holdings, wherethrough he found many of the said lands in non-entry; the which he confiscate and brought home to his own use, and afterward annexed them to the crown, as ye shall hear. Syne brought many of the great men of the isles captive with him, such as Mudyart, M'Connel, M'Loyd of the Lewes, M'Neil, M'Lane, M'Intosh,

John Mudyart, M'Kay, M'Kenzie, with many others that I cannot rehearse at this time. Some of them he put in ward and some in court, and some he took pledges for good rule in time coming. So he brought the isles, both north and south, in good rule and peace; wherefore he had great profit, service, and obedience of people a long time hereafter; and as long as he had the heads of the country in subjection, they lived in great peace and rest, and there was great riches and policy by the king's justice."—*Pitscottie*, p. 152.

Note XVI.

Rest safe till morning—pity 'twere
Such cheek should feel the midnight air.—St. XXXV. p. 91.

Hardihood was in every respect so essential to the character of a Highlander, that the reproach of effeminacy was the most bitter which could be thrown upon him. Yet it was sometimes hazarded on what we might presume to think slight grounds. It is reported of old Sir Ewen Cameron of Lochiel, when upwards of seventy, that he was surprised by night on a hunting or military expedition. He wrapped him in his plaid, and lay contentedly down upon the snow, with which the ground happened to be covered. Among his attendants, who were preparing to take their rest in the same manner, he observed that one of his grandsons, for his better accommodation, had rolled a large snow-ball, and placed it below his head. The wrath of the ancient chief was awakened by a symptom of what he conceived to be degenerate luxury. "Out upon thee," said he,

kicking the frozen bolster from the head which it supported, "art thou so effeminate as to need a pillow?" The officer of engineers, whose curious letters from the Highlands have been more than once quoted, tells a similar story of Macdonald of Keppoch, and subjoins the following remarks:

"This and many other stories are romantick; but there is one thing, that at first thought might seem very romantick, of which I have been credibly assured, that when the Highlanders are constrained to lie among the hills, in cold dry windy weather, they sometimes soak the plaid in some river or burn, (*i. e.* brook;) and then, holding up a corner of it a little above their heads, they turn themselves round and round, till they are enveloped by the whole mantle. They then lay themselves down on the heath, upon the leeward side of some hill, where the wet and the warmth of their bodies make a steam, like that of a boiling kettle. The wet, they say, keeps them warm by thickening the stuff, and keeping the wind from penetrating.

"I must confess I should have been apt to question this fact, had I not frequently seen them wet from morning to night; and, even at the beginning of the rain, not so much as stir a few yards to shelter, but continue in it without necessity, till they were, as we say, wet through and through. And that is soon effected by the looseness and spunginess of the plaiding; but the bonnet is frequently taken off, and wrung like a dish-clout, and then put on again.

"They have been accustomed from their infancy to be often wet, and to take the water like spaniels, and this is become a

second nature, and can scarcely be called a hardship to them, insomuch that I used to say, they seemed to be of the duck-kind, and to love water as well. Though I never saw this preparation for sleep in windy weather, yet, setting out early in a morning from one of the huts, I have seen the marks of their lodging, where the ground has been free from rime or snow, which remained all round the spot where they had lain."—*Letters from Scotland.* Lond. 1754. 8vo. II. p. 108.

Note VIII.

———*His henchman came.*—St. XXXV. p. 91.

"This officer is a sort of secretary, and is to be ready, upon all occasions, to venture his life in defence of his master; and at drinking-bouts he stands behind his seat, at his haunch, from whence his title is derived, and watches the conversation, to see if any one offends his patron.

"An English officer being in company with a certain chieftain, and several other Highland gentlemen, near Killichumen, had an argument with the *great man;* and both being well warmed with usky, at last the dispute grew very hot.

"A youth who was hanchman, not understanding one word of English, imagined his chief was insulted, and thereupon drew his pistol from his side, and snapped it at the officer's head; but the pistol missed fire, otherwise it is more than probable he might have suffered death from the hand of that little vermin.

"But it is very disagreeable to an Englishman over a bottle, with the Highlanders, to see every one of them have his gilly, that is, his servant, standing behind him all the while, let what will be the subject of conversation."—*Letters from Scotland*, II. 159.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

NOTES TO CANTO THIRD.

Note I.

And while the Fiery Cross glanced like a meteor round.

St. I. p. 98.

When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forwards, with equal dispatch, to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbours, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the

Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear, suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Breadalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours. The late Alexander Stuart, Esq. of Invernahyle, described to me his having sent round the Fiery Cross through the district of Appine, during the same commotion. The coast was threatened by a descent from two English frigates, and the flower of the young men were with the army of Prince Charles Edward, then in England; yet the summons was so effectual, that even old age and childhood obeyed it; and a force was collected in a few hours, so numerous and so enthusiastic, that all attempt at the intended diversion upon the country of the absent warriors, was in prudence abandoned, as desperate.

This practice, like some others, is common to the Highlanders with the ancient Scandinavians, as will appear by the following extract from Olaus Magnus:

"When the enemy is upon the sea-coast, or within the limits of northern kingdomes, then presently, by the command of the provincial governours, with the counsel and consent of the old souldiers, who are notably skilled in such like business, a staff of three hands length, in the common sight of them all, is car-

ried, by the speedy running of some active young man, unto that village or city, with this command,—that on the 3. 4. or 8. day. one, two, or three, or else every man in particular, from 15 years old, shall come with his arms, and expences for ten or twenty days, upon pain that his or their houses shall be burnt, (which is intimated by the burning of the staff,) or else the master to be hanged, (which is signified by the cord tied to it,) to appear speedily on such a bank, or field, or valley, to hear the cause he is called, and to receive orders from the said provincial governours what he shall do. Wherefore that messenger, swifter than any post or waggon, having done his commission, comes slowly back again, bringing a token with him that he hath done all legally; and every moment one or another runs to every village, and tells those places what they must do." -------- "The messengers, therefore, of the footmen, that are to give warning to the people to meet for the battail, run fiercely and swiftly; for no snow, nor rain, nor heat can stop them, nor night hold them; but they will soon run the race they undertake. The first messenger tells it to the next village, and that to the next; and so the hubbub runs all over, till they all know it in that stift or territory, where, when, and wherefore they must meet."—OLAUS MAGNUS' *History of the Goths*, englished by J. S. Lond. 1658. book iv. chap. 3, 4.

Note II.

That Monk of savage form and face.—St. IV. p. 101.

The state of religion in the middle ages afforded consider-

able facilities for those whose mode of life excluded them from regular worship, to secure, nevertheless, the ghostly assistance of confessors, perfectly willing to adapt the nature of their doctrine to the necessities and peculiar circumstances of their flock. Robin Hood, it is well known, had his celebrated domestic chaplain Friar Tuck. And that same curtal friar was probably matched in manners and appearance by the ghostly fathers of the Tynedale robbers, who are thus described in an excommunication fulminated against their patrons by Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham, tempore Henrici VIII. "We have further understood, that there are many chaplains in the said territories of Tynedale and Redesdale, who are public and open maintainers of concubinage, irregular, suspended, excommunicated, and interdicted persons, and withal so utterly ignorant of letters, that it has been found by those who objected this to them, that there were some who, having celebrated mass for ten years, were still unable to read the sacramental service. We have also understood there are persons among them, who, although not ordained, do take upon them the offices of priesthood; and, in contempt of God, celebrate divine and sacred rites, and administer the sacraments, not only in sacred and dedicated places, but in those which are prophane and interdicted, and most wretchedly ruinous; they themselves being attired in ragged, torn, and most filthy vestments, altogether unfit to be used in divine or even in temporal offices. The which said chaplains do administer sacraments and sacramental rites to the aforesaid manifest and infamous thieves, robbers,

depredators, receivers of stolen goods, and plunderers, and that without restitution, or intention to restore, as is evinced by the fact; and do also openly admit them to the rites of ecclesiastical sepulture, without exacting security for restitution, although they are prohibited from doing so by the sacred canons, as well as by the institutes of the saints and fathers. All which infers the heavy peril of their own souls, and is a pernicious example to the other believers in Christ, as well as no slight, but an aggravated injury to the numbers despoiled and plundered of their goods, gear, herds, and chattels."*

To this lively and picturesque description of the confessors and churchmen of predatory tribes, there may be added some curious particulars respecting the priests attached to the several septs of native Irish, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. These friars had indeed to plead, that the incursions, which they not only pardoned, but even encouraged, were made upon those hostile to them, as well in religion as from national antipathy. But by protestant writers they are uniformly alledged to be the chief instruments of Irish insurrection, the very well-spring of all rebellion towards the English government. Lithgow, the Scottish traveller, declares the Irish wood-kerne, or

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* The Monition against the Robbers of Tynedale and Redesdale, with which I was favoured by my friend Mr Surtees, of Mainsforth, may be found in the original Latin, in the Appendix to the Introduction to the Border Minstrelsy, No. VII. fourth edition.

predatory tribes, to be but the hounds of their hunting priests, who directed their incursions by their pleasure, partly for sustenance, partly to gratify animosity, partly to foment general division, and always for the better security and easier domination of the friars.* Derrick, the liveliness and minuteness of whose descriptions may frequently apologize for his doggrel verses, after describing an Irish feast, and the encouragement given, by the songs of the bards, to its termination in an incursion upon the parts of the country more immediately under the dominion of the English, records the no less powerful arguments used by the friar to excite their animosity:

> And more t' augment the flame,
> and rancour of their harte,
> The friar, of his counsells vile,
> to rebelles doth imparte,
> Affirming that it is
> an almose deede to God,
> To make the English subjects taste
> the Irishe rebells rodde.
> To spoile, to kill, to burne,
> this frier's counsell is;
> And for the doing of the same,
> he warrantes heavenlie blisse.
> He tells a holie tale;
> the white he tournes to blacke;
> And through the pardons in his male,
> he workes a knavishe knacke.

The wreckful invasion of a part of the English pale is then

* Lithgow's Travels, first edit. p. 431.

described with some spirit; the burning of houses, driving off cattle, and all pertaining to such predatory inroads, is illustrated by a rude cut. The defeat of the Irish, by a party of English soldiers from the next garrison, is then commemorated, and in like manner adorned with an engraving, in which the friar is exhibited mourning over the slain chieftain; or, as the rubric expresses it,

The friar then, that treacherous knave, with ough ough-hone lament,
To see his cousin Devill's-son to have so foul event.

The matter is handled at great length in the text, of which the following verses are more than sufficient sample:—

The frier seying this,
  lamentes that lucklesse parte,
And curseth to the pitte of hell
  the death man's sturdie harte:
Yet for to quight them with
  the frier taketh paine,
For all the synnes that ere he did
  remission to obtaine.
And therefore serves his booke,
  the candell and the bell;
But thinke you that suche apishe toies
  bring damned souls from hell?
It 'longs not to my parte
  infernall things to knowe;
B tI beleve till later daie,
  thei rise not from belowe.
Yet hope that friers give
  to this rebellious rout,
If that their soules should chaunce in hell,
  to bring them quicklie out,

Doeth make them lead suche lives,
as neither God nor man,
Without revenge for their desartes,
permitte or suffer can.
Thus friers are the cause,
the fountain and the spring,
Of hurleburles in this lande,
of eche unhappie thing.
Thei cause them to rebell
against their soveraigne quene;
And through rebellion often tymes,
their lives doe vanishe clene.
So as by friers meanes,
in whom all follie swimme,
The Irishe karne doe often lose
the life, with hedde and limme.*

As the Irish tribes, and those of the Scottish Highlands, are much more intimately allied, by language, manners, dress, and customs, than the antiquaries of either country have been willing to admit, I flatter myself I have here produced a strong warrant for the character sketched in the text. The following picture, though of a different kind, serves to establish the existence of ascetic religionists, to a comparatively late period, in the Highlands and Western Isles. There is a great deal of simplicity in the description, for which, as for much similar information, I am obliged to Dr John Martin, who visited the

* This curious Picture of Ireland was inserted by the author in the republication of Somers' Tracts, Vol. I., in which the plates have been also inserted, from the only impressions known to exist, belonging to the copy in the Advocate's Library. See Somers' Tracts, Vol. I. p. 591, 594.

Hebrides, at the suggestion of Sir Robert Sibbald, a Scottish antiquary of eminence, and early in the eighteenth century published a description of them, which procured him admission into the Royal Society. He died in London about 1719. His work is a strange mixture of learning, observation, and gross credulity.

"I remember," says this author, "I have seen an old lay-capuchin here, (in the island of Benbecula,) called in their language *Brahir-bocht*, that is, *Poor Brother*; which is literally true; for he answers this character, having nothing but what is given him: he holds himself fully satisfied with food and rayment, and lives in as great simplicity as any of his order; his diet is very mean, and he drinks only fair water: his habit is no less mortifying than that of his brethren elsewhere: he wears a short coat, which comes no farther than his middle, with narrow sleeves like a waistcoat: he wears a plad above it, girt about the middle, which reaches to his knee: the plad is fastened on his breast with a wooden pin, his neck bare, and his feet often so too: he wears a hat for ornament, and the string about it is a bit of a fisher's line, made of horse-hair. This plad he wears instead of a gown, worn by those of his order in other countries. I told him he wanted the flaxen girdle that men of his order usually wear: he answered me, that he wore a leather one, which was the same thing. Upon the matter, if he is spoke to when at meat, he answers again; which is contrary to the custom of his order. This poor man frequently diverts himself with angling of trouts: he lies upon straw,

and has no bell (as others have) to call him to his devotion, but only his conscience, as he told me."—MARTIN'S *Description of the Western Islands*, p. 82.

Note III.

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.—St. V. p. 102.

The legend which follows is not of the author's invention. It is possible he may differ from modern critics, in supposing that the records of human superstition, if peculiar to, and characteristic of, the country in which the scene is laid, are a legitimate subject of poetry. He gives, however, a ready assent to the narrower proposition, which condemns all attempts of an irregular and disordered fancy to excite terror, by accumulating a train of fantastic and incoherent horrors, whether borrowed from all countries, and patched upon a narrative belonging to one which knew them not, or derived from the author's own imagination.

In the present case, therefore, I appeal to the record which I have transcribed, with the variation of a very few words, from the geographical collections made by the laird of Macfarlane. I know not whether it be necessary to remark, that the miscellaneous concourse of youths and maidens on the night, and on the spot where the miracle is said to have taken place, might, in an incredulous age, have somewhat diminished the wonder which accompanied the conception of Gilli-Doir-Magrevollich.

" There is bot two myles from Inverloghie, the church of

Kilmalee, in Loghyeld. In ancient tymes there was ane church builded upon ane hill, which was above this church, which doeth now stand in this toune; and ancient men doeth say, that there was a battell foughten on ane litle hill not the tenth part of a myle from this church, be certaine men which they did not know what they were. And long tyme thereafter, certaine herds of that toune, and of the next toune, called Unnatt, both wenches and youthes, did on a tyme conveen with others on that hill; and the day being somewhat cold, did gather the bones of the dead men that were slayne long tyme before in that place, and did make a fire to warm them. At last they did all remove from the fire, except one maid or wench, which was verie cold, and she did remaine there for a space. She being quyetlie her alone, without anie other companie, took up her cloaths above her knees, or thereby, to warm her; a wind did come and caste the ashes upon her, and she was conceived of ane man-child. Severall tymes thereafter she was verie sick, and at last she was knowne to be with chyld. And then her parents did ask at her the matter heiroff, which the wench could not weel answer which way to satisfie them. At last she resolved them with ane answer. As fortune fell upon her concerning this marvellous miracle, the chyld being borne, his name was called *Gili-doir Maghrevollich*, that is to say, the *Black child, Son to the Bones.* So called, his grandfather sent him to school, and so he was a good schollar, and godlie. He did build this church which doeth now stand in Lochyeld, called Kilmalie."—MACFARLANE, *ut supra*, II. 188.

Note IV.

Yet ne'er again to braid her hair,

The virgin snood did Alice wear.—St. V. p. 103.

The *snood*, or ribband, with which a Scottish lass braided her hair, had an emblematical signification, and applied to her maiden character. It was exchanged for the *curch*, *toy*, or coif, when she passed, by marriage, into the matron state. But if the damsel was so unfortunate as to lose pretensions to the name of maiden, without gaining a right to that of matron, she was neither permitted to use the snood, nor advanced to the graver dignity of the curch. In old Scottish songs there occur many sly allusions to such misfortune, as in the old words to the popular tune of "Ower the muir amang the heather:"

Down amang the broom, the broom,
  Down amang the broom, my dearie,
The lassie lost her silken snood,
  That gard her greet till she was wearie.

Note V.

The desert gave him visions wild,

Such as might suit the spectre's child.—St. VII. p. 105.

In adopting the legend concerning the birth of the Founder of the Church of Kilmallie, the author has endeavoured to trace the effects which such a belief was likely to produce, in a barbarous age, on the person to whom it related. It seems

likely that he must have become a fanatic or an impostor, or that mixture of both which forms a more frequent character than either of them, as existing separately. In truth, mad persons are frequently more anxious to impress upon others a faith in their visions, than they are themselves confirmed in their reality: as, on the other hand, it is difficult for the most cool-headed impostor long to personate an enthusiast, without in some degree believing what he is so eager to have believed. It was a natural attribute of such a character as the supposed hermit, that he should credit the numerous superstitions with which the minds of ordinary Highlanders are almost always embued. A few of these are slightly alluded to in this stanza. The River Dæmon, or River-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession, with all its attendants. The "noontide hag," called in Gaelic *Glas-lich*, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart. A goblin dressed in antique armour, and having one hand covered with blood, called, from that circumstance, *Lham-dearg*, or Red-hand, is a tenant of the forests of Glenmore and Rothemurcus. Other spirits of the desert, all frightful in shape, and malignant in disposition, are believed to

frequent different mountains and glens of the Highlands, where any unusual appearance, produced by mist, or the strange lights that are sometimes thrown upon particular objects, never fails to present an apparition to the imagination of the solitary and melancholy mountaineer.

Note VI.

The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream.—St. VII. p. 106.

Most great families in the Highlands were supposed to have a tutelar, or rather a domestic spirit, attached to them, who took an interest in their prosperity, and intimated, by its wailings, any approaching disaster. That of Grant of Grant was called *May Moullach*, and appeared in the form of a girl, who had her arm covered with hair. Grant of Rothemurcus had an attendant called *Bodach-an-dun*, or the Ghost of the Hill; and many other examples might be mentioned. The Ben-Shie * implies the female Fairy, whose lamentations were often supposed to precede the death of a chieftain of particular families. When she is visible, it is in the form of an old woman, with a blue mantle, and streaming hair. A superstition of the same kind is, I believe, universally received by the inferior ranks of the native Irish.

The death of the head of a highland family is also sometimes supposed to be announced by a chain of lights of different co-

* In the first edition this was erroneously explained as equivalent to *Ben-Schichian*, or the Head of the Fairies.

lours, called *Dr'eug*, or Death of the Druid. The direction which it takes marks the place of the funeral.

Note VII.

Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, careering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride.—St. V. p. 106.

A presage of the kind alluded to in the text is still believed to announce death to the ancient highland family of M'Lean of Lochbuy. The spirit of an ancestor slain in battle, is heard to gallop along a stony bank, and then to ride thrice around the family residence, ringing his fairy bridle, and thus intimating the approaching calamity. How easily the eye as well as the ear may be deceived upon such occasions, is evident from the stories of armies in the air, and other spectral phœnomena with which history abounds. Such an apparition is said to have been witnessed upon the side of Southerfell mountain, between Penrith and Keswick, upon the 23d June, 1744, by two persons, William Lancaster of Blakehills, and Daniel Stricket his servant, whose attestation to the fact, with a full account of the apparition, dated the 21st July, 1785, is printed in Clarke's Survey of the Lakes. The apparition consisted of several troops of horse moving in regular order, with a steady rapid motion, making a curved sweep around the fell, and seeming to the spectators to disappear over the ridge of the mountain. Many persons witnessed this phœnomenon, and

observed the last, or last but one, of the supposed troop, occasionally leave his rank, and pass, at a gallop, to the front, when he resumed the same steady pace. This curious appearance, making the necessary allowance for imagination, may be perhaps sufficiently accounted for by optical deception.—*Survey of the Lakes*, p. 35.

Supernatural intimations of approaching fate are not, I believe, confined to highland families. Howel mentions having seen at a lapidary's, in 1632, a monumental stone, prepared for four persons of the name of Oxenham, before the death of each of whom, the inscription stated a white bird to have appeared, and fluttered around the bed, while the patient was in the last agony.—*Familiar Letters*, Edit. 1726, p. 247. Glanville mentions one family, the members of which received this solemn sign by music, the sound of which floated from the family residence, and seemed to die in a neighbouring wood; another, that of Captain Wood of Bampton, to whom the signal was given by knocking. But the most remarkable instance of the kind, occurs in the MS. Memoirs of Lady Fanshaw, so exemplary for her conjugal affection. Her husband, Sir Richard, and she, chanced, during their abode in Ireland, to visit a friend, the head of a sept, who resided in his ancient baronial castle, surrounded with a moat. At midnight, she was awakened by a ghastly and supernatural scream, and looking out of bed, beheld, by the moonlight, a female face and part of the form, hovering at the window. The distance from the ground, as well as the circumstance of the moat, excluded the possibility

that what she beheld was of this world. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, but pale, and the hair, which was reddish, loose and dishevelled. The dress, which Lady Fanshaw's terror did not prevent her remarking accurately, was that of the ancient Irish. This apparition continued to exhibit itself for some time, and then vanished with two shrieks similar to that which had first excited Lady Fanshaw's attention. In the morning, with infinite terror, she communicated to her host what she had witnessed, and found him prepared not only to credit but to account for the apparition. "A near relation of my family," said he, "expired last night in this castle. We disguised our certain expectation of the event from you, lest it should throw a cloud over the cheerful reception which was your due. Now, before such an event happens in this family and castle, the female spectre whom you have seen always is visible. She is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done to his family, he caused to be drowned in the Castle Moat."

Note VIII.

Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave.—St. VIII. p. 107.

Inch-Cailliach, the Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch-Lomond. The church belonging to the former nunnery was long used as

the place of worship for the parish of Buchanan, but scarce any vestiges of it now remain. The burial ground continues to be used, and contains the family places of sepulture of several neighbouring clans. The monuments of the lairds of Macgregor, and of other families, claiming a descent from the old Scottish King Alpine, are most remarkable. The Highlanders are as jealous of their rights of sepulchre, as may be expected from a people whose whole laws and government, if clan-ship can be called so, turned upon the single principle of family descent. "May his ashes be scattered on the water," was one of the deepest and most solemn imprecations which they used against an enemy.

Note IX.

——— *The dun deer's hide*

On fleeter foot was never tied.—St. XIII. p. 113.

The present *brogue* of the Highlanders is made of half-dried leather, with holes to admit and let out the water; for walking the moors dry-shod, is a matter altogether out of question. The ancient buskin was still ruder, being made of the undress'd deer's hide, with the hair outwards, a circumstance which procured the Highlanders the well-known epithet of *Red-shanks*. The process is very accurately described by one Eldar (himself a Highlander) in the project for a union between England and Scotland, addressed to Henry VIII. "We go a hunting, and after that we have slain red-deer, we flay off the skin by and by, and setting of our bare-foot on the inside thereof, for

want of cunning shoemakers, by your grace's pardon, we play the coblers, compassing and measuring so much thereof, as shall reach up to our ancles, pricking the upper part thereof with holes, that the water may repass where it enters, and stretching it up with a strong thong of the same above our said ancles. So, and please your noble grace, we make our shoes. Therefore, we using such manner of shoes, the rough hairy side outwards, in your grace's dominions of England we be called *Rough-footed Scots.*"—PINKERTON's *History*, vol. II. p. 397.

Note X.

The dismal Coronach.—St. XV. p. 116.

The *Coronach* of the Highlanders, like the *Ululatus* of the Romans, and the *Ulaloo* of the Irish, was a wild expression of lamentation poured forth by the mourners over the body of a departed friend. When the words of it were articulate, they expressed the praises of the deceast, and the loss the clan would sustain by his death. The following is a lamentation of this kind, literally translated from the Gælic, to some of the ideas of which the text stands indebted. The tune is so popular, that it has since become the war-march, or Gathering of the clan.

Coronach on Sir Lauchlan, Chief of Maclean.

Which of all the Sennachies
Can trace thy line from the root, up to Paradise,

But Macvuirih, the son of Fergus?
No sooner had thine ancient stately tree
Taken firm root in Albin,
Than one of thy forefathers fell at Harlaw.—
'Twas then we lost a chief of deathless name!—

'Tis no base weed—no planted tree,
Nor a seedling of last autumn;
Nor a sapling planted at Beltain; *
Wide, wide around, were spread its lofty branches—
But the topmost bough is lowly laid!
Thou hast forsaken us before Sawaine. †

Thy dwelling is the winter house;—
Loud, sad, and mighty is thy death song!—
Oh! courteous champion of Montrose!
Oh! stately warrior of the Celtic Isles!
Thou shalt buckle thy harness on no more!

The coronach has for some years past been superseded at funerals by the use of the bag-pipe, and that also is, like many other Highland peculiarities, falling into disuse, unless in remote districts.

Note XI.

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,

It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.—St. XVIII. p. 122.

A glance at the provincial map of Perthshire, or at any large map of Scotland, will trace the progress of the signal through the small district of lakes and mountains, which, in exercise

* Bel's fire, or Whitsunday. † Halloween.

of my poetical privilege, I have subjected to the authority of my imaginary chieftain; and which, at the period of my romance, was really occupied by a clan who claimed a descent from Alpine, a clan the most unfortunate, and most persecuted, but neither the least distinguished, least powerful, or least brave, of the tribes of the Gael.

> Sliochd nan Righre Duchasach,
> Bha shios an Dùn Staibhinish,
> Aig an robh Crùn na h' alba o thùs,
> S' aig a bheil Dùchas fathast ris.

The first stage of the Fiery Cross is to Duncraggan, a place near the Brigg of Turk, where a short stream divides Loch-Achray from Loch-Vennachar. From thence, it passes towards Callender, and then, turning to the left up the pass of Lennie, is consigned to Norman at the chapel of Saint Bride, which stood on a small and romantic knoll in the middle of the valley, called Strath-Ire. Tombea and Arnandave, or Ardmandave, are names of places in the vicinity. The alarm is then supposed to pass along the lake of Lubnaig, and through the various glens in the district of Balquidder, including the neighbouring tracts of Glenfinlas and Strathgartney.

Note XII.

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze.—St. XXIII. p. 128.

It may be necessary to inform the southern reader, that the heath on the Scottish moor-lands is often set fire to, that the

sheep may have the advantage of the young herbage produced in room of the tough old heather-plants. This custom (execrated by sportsmen,) produces occasionally the most beautiful nocturnal appearance, similar almost to the discharge of a volcano. The simile is not new to poetry. The charge of a warrior, in the fine ballad of Hardyknute, is said to be "like a fire to heather set."

Note XIII.

——— *By his Chieftain's hand.*—St. XXIII. p. 180.

The deep and implicit respect paid by the highland clansmen to their chief, rendered this both a common and a solemn oath. In other respects, they were like most savage nations, capricious in their ideas concerning the obligatory power of oaths. One solemn mode of swearing was by kissing the *dirk*, imprecating upon themselves death by that, or a similar weapon, if they broke their vow. But for oaths in the usual form, they are said to have had little respect. As for the reverence due to the chief, it may be guessed from the following odd example, of a Highland point of honour.

"The clan whereto the abovementioned tribe belongs, is the only one I have heard of, which is without a chief; that is, being divided into families, under several chieftains, without any particular patriarch of the whole name. And this is a great reproach, as may appear from an affair that fell out at my table, in the Highlands, between one of that name and a Cameron. The provocation given by the latter, was—Name your

chief.—The return to it, at once, was—You are a fool. They went out next morning, but having early notice of it, I sent a small party of soldiers after them, which, in all probability, prevented some barbarous mischief, that might have ensued; for the chiefless Highlander, who is himself a petty chieftain, was going to the place appointed with a small sword and pistol, whereas the Cameron (an old man) took with him only his broad-sword, according to agreement.

"When all was over, and I had, at least seemingly, reconciled them, I was told the words, of which I seemed to think but slightly, were, to one of that clan, the greatest of all provocations."—*Letters from the North of Scotland*, vol. II. p. 221.

Note XIV.

——— *Coir-nan-Uriskin.*—St. XXIV. p. 131.

This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the south-eastern extremity of Loch-Katrine. It is surrounded with stupendous rocks, and overshadowed with birch-trees, mingled with oaks, the spontaneous production of the mountain, even where its cliffs appear denuded of soil. A dale in so wild a situation, and amid a people whose genius bordered on the romantic, did not remain without appropriate deities. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the Wild or Shaggy Men. Perhaps this, as conjectured by Mr Alexander Campbell, * may have origi-

* Journey from Edinburgh, 1802, p. 109.

nally only implied its being the haunt of a ferocious banditti. But tradition has ascribed to the *Urisk*, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian Satyr. The *Urisk* seems not to have inherited, with the form, the petulance of the sylvan deity of the classics: his occupations, on the contrary, resembled those of Milton's lubbar fiend, or of the Scottish Brownie, though he differed from both in name and appearance. "The Urisks," says Dr Graham, "were a sort of lubberly supernaturals, who, like the Brownies, could be gained over by kind attention, to perform the drudgery of the farm, and it was believed that many of the families in the Highlands had one of the order attached to it. They were supposed to be dispersed over the Highlands, each in his own wild recess, but the solemn stated meetings of the order were regularly held in this cave of Benvenew. This current superstition, no doubt, alludes to some circumstance in the ancient history of this country."—*Scenery on the Southern Confines of Perthshire.* 1806. p. 19.

It must be owned that the *Coir*, or den, does not, in its present state, meet our ideas of a subterranean grotto or cave, being only a small and narrow cavity, among huge fragments of rocks, rudely piled together. But such a scene is liable to convulsions of nature, which a lowlander cannot estimate, and which may have choaked up what was originally a cavern. At least the name and tradition authorize the author of a fictitious tale, to assert its having been such at the remote period in which his scene is laid.

Note XV.

——— *The wild pass of Beal'-nam-Bo.*—St. XXVI. p. 113.

Bealach-nam-Bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with aged birch trees, a little higher up the mountain than the Coir-nan-Uriskin, treated of in the last note. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.

Note XVI.

A single page to bear his sword,
Alone attended on his Lord.—St. XXVI. p. 134.

A Highland chief being as absolute in his patriarchal authority as any prince, had a corresponding number of officers attached to his person. He had his body-guards, called *Luichttach,* picked from his clan for strength, activity, and entire devotion to his person. These, according to their deserts, were sure to share abundantly in the rude profusion of his hospitality. It is recorded, for example, by tradition, that Allan Mac Lean, chief of that clan, happened upon a time to hear one of these favourite retainers observe to his comrade, that their chief grew old—"Whence do you infer that?" replied the other. "When was it," rejoined the first, "that a soldier of Allan's was obliged, as I am now, not only to eat the flesh from this bone, but even to tear off the inner skin, or filament?" The hint was quite sufficient, and Mac Lean next morning, to relieve his followers from such dire necessity, undertook an inroad on the mainland, the ravage of which altogether effaced the memory of his former expeditions for the like purpose.

Our officer of Engineers, so often quoted, has given us a distinct list of the domestic officers who, independent of *Luicht-tach*, or *gardes de corps*, belonged to the establishment of a Highland Chief. These are, 1. *The Hench-man.* See these notes, p. 331. 2. The Bard. See p. 309. 3. *Bladier*, or spokesman. 4. *Gillie-more*, or Sword-bearer, alluded to in the text. 5. *Gillie-casflue*, who carried the chief, if on foot, over the fords. 6. *Gillie-comstraine*; who leads the chief's horse. 7. *Gillie-Trushanarinsh*; the baggage-man, 8. The piper. 9. The piper's gillie, or attendant, who carries the bagpipe.* Although this appeared, naturally enough, very ridiculous to an English officer, who considered the master of such a retinue as no more than an English gentleman of 500l. a year; yet, in the circumstances of the chief, whose strength and importance consisted in the number and attachment of his followers, it was of the last consequence, in point of policy, to have in his gift, subordinate offices, which called immediately round his person those who were most devoted to him, and, being of value in their estimation, were also the means of rewarding them.

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* Letters from Scotland, vol. II. p. 158.

NOTES TO CANTO FOURTH.

Note I.

The Taghairm call'd, by which, afar,
Our sires foresaw the events of war.—St. IV. p. 146.

The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of enquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped up in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a water-fall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits, who haunt these desolate recesses. In some of the Hebrides, they attributed the same oracular power to a large black stone by the sea-shore, which they approached with certain solemnities, and considered the first fancy which came into their own minds,

after they did so, to be the undoubted dictate of the tutelar deity of the stone, and as such, to be, if possible, punctually complied with. Martin has recorded the following curious modes of Highland augury, in which the Taghairm, and its effects upon the person who was subjected to it, may serve to illustrate the text.

"It was an ordinary thing among the over-curious to consult an invisible oracle, concerning the fate of families and battles, &c. This was performed three different ways: the first was by a company of men, one of whom being detached by lot, was afterwards carried to a river, which was the boundary between two villages; four of the company laid hold on him, and, having shut his eyes, they took him by the legs and arms, and then, tossing him to and again, struck his hips with force against the bank. One of them cried out, What is it you have got here? another answers, A log of birch-wood. The other cries again, Let his invisible friends appear from all quarters, and let them relieve him by giving an answer to our present demands; and in a few minutes after, a number of little creatures came from the sea, who answered the question, and disappeared suddenly. The man was then set at liberty, and they all returned home, to take their measures according to the prediction of their false prophets; but the poor deluded fools were abused, for the answer was still ambiguous. This was always practised in the night, and may literally be called the works of darkness.

"I had an account from the most intelligent and judicious

men in the Isle of Skie, that, about sixty-two years ago, the oracle was thus consulted only once, and that was in the parish of Kilmartin, on the east side, by a wicked and mischievous race of people, who are now extinguished, both root and branch.

"The second way of consulting the oracle was by a party of men, who first retired to solitary places, remote from any house, and there they singled out one of their number, and wrapt him in a big cow's hide, which they folded about him; his whole body was covered with it, except his head, and so left in this posture all night, until his invisible friends relieved him, by giving a proper answer to the question in hand; which he received, as he fancied, from several persons that he found about him all that time. His consorts returned to him at the break of day, and then he communicated his news to them; which often proved fatal to those concerned in such unwarrantable enquiries.

"There was a third way of consulting, which was a confirmation of the second above-mentioned. The same company who put the man into the hide, took a live cat, and put him on a spit; one of the number was employed to turn the spit, and one of his consorts enquired of him, What are you doing? he answered, I roast this cat, until his friends answer the question; which must be the same that was proposed by the man shut up in the hide. And afterwards, a very big cat * comes

* The reader may have met with the story of the "King of

attended by a number of lesser cats, desiring to relieve the cat turned upon the spit, and then answers the question. If this answer proved the same that was given to the man in the hide, then it was taken as a confirmation of the other, which, in this case, was believed infallible.

"Mr Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-Vist, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him, it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity with some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide, as above-mentioned; during which time he felt and heard such terrible things, that he could not express them; the impression it made on him was such as could never go off, and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously, and with an air of great remorse, and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime; he declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis, for any thing I know."—*Description of the Western Isles*, p. 110. See also PENNANT'S *Scottish Tour*, vol. II. p. 361.

Note II.

The choicest of the prey we had,

When swept our merry-men Gallan-gad.—St. IV. p. 147.

I know not if it be worth observing, that this passage is taken almost literally from the mouth of an old Highland

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the Cats," in Lord Littleton's Letters. It is well known in the Highlands as a nursery tale.

Kern, or Ketteran, as they were called. He used to narrate the merry doings of the good old time when he was follower of Rob Roy Macgregor. This leader, on one occasion, thought proper to make a descent upon the lower part of the Loch-Lomond district, and summoned all the heritors and farmers to meet at the Kirk of Drymen, to pay him black-mail, *i. e.* tribute for forbearance and protection. As this invitation was supported by a band of thirty or forty stout fellows, only one gentleman, an ancestor, if I mistake not, of the present Mr Grahame of Gartmore, ventured to decline compliance. Rob Roy instantly swept his land of all he could drive away, and among the spoil was a bull of the old Scottish wild breed, whose ferocity occasioned great plague to the Ketterans. " But ere we had reached the Row of Dennan," said the old man, " a child might have scratched his ears."* The circumstance is a minute one, but it paints the times when the poor beeve was compelled

> To hoof it o'er as many weary miles,
> With goading pikemen hollowing at his heels,
> As e'er the bravest antler of the woods.
>
> *Ethwald.*

Note III.

—— *that huge cliff, whose ample verge*
Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.—St. V. p. 148.

There is a rock so named in the forest of Glenfinlas, by

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* This anecdote was, in former editions, inaccurately ascribed to Gregor Macgregor of Glengyle, called *Ghlune Dhu*, or Black-knee, a relation of Rob Roy, but, as I have been assured, not addicted to his predatory excesses.

which a tumultuary cataract takes its course. This wild place is said in former times to have afforded refuge to an outlaw, who was supplied with provisions by a woman, who lowered them down from the brink of the precipice above. His water he procured for himself, by letting down a flaggon tied to a string, into the black pool beneath the fall.

Note IV.

Or raven on the blasted oak,
That, watching while the deer is broke,
His morsel claims with sullen croak.—St. V. p. 148.

Every thing belonging to the chace was matter of solemnity among our ancestors, but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking* the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also. "There is a little gristle," says Turberville, "which is upon the spoone of the brisket, which we call the raven's bone; and I have seen in some places a raven so wont and accustomed to it, that she would never fail to croak and cry for it all the time you were in breaking up of the deer, and would not depart till she had it." In the very ancient metrical romance of Sir Tristrem, that peerless Knight, who is said to have been the very deviser of all rules of chase, did not omit this ceremony:

"The raven he yaf his yiftes
Sat on the fourched tree."

Sir Tristrem, 2d *Edition*, p. 34.

The raven might also challenge his rights by the Book of Saint Albans; for thus says Dame Juliana Berners:—

————————— Slitteth anon
The bely to the side from the corbyn bone;
That is corbins fee, at the death he will be.

Jonson, in "The Sad Shepherd," gives a more poetical account of the same ceremony.

Marian.——He that undoes him,
Doth cleave the brisket bone upon the spoon,
Of which a little gristle grows—you call it—
Robin Hood. The raven's bone.
Marian——————Now o'er head sat a raven
On a sere bough, a grown, great bird and hoarse,
Who, all the time the deer was breaking up,
So croaked and cried for it, as all the huntsmen,
Especially old Scathlocke, thought it ominous."

Note V.

Which spills the foremost foeman's life,
That party conquers in the strife.—St. VI. p. 150.

Though this be in the text described as the response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood. It is said that the Highlanders under Montrose, were so deeply embued with this notion, that on the morning of the battle of Tippermoor, they murdered a defenceless herdsman, whom they found in the fields, merely to secure an advantage of so much consequence to their party.

Note VI.

Alice Brand.—St. XII. p. 158.

This little fairy tale is founded upon a very curious Danish ballad, which occurs in the KIEMPE VISER, a collection of heroic songs, first published in 1591, and re-printed in 1695, inscribed by Anders Sofrensen, the collector and editor, to Sophia Queen of Denmark. I have been favoured with a literal translation of the original, by my learned friend Mr Robert Jamieson, whose deep knowledge of Scandinavian antiquities will, I hope, one day be displayed in illustration of the history of Scottish Ballad and Song, for which no man possesses more ample materials. The story will remind the readers of the Border Minstrelsy of the tale of the Young Tamlane. But this is only a solitary and not very marked instance of coincidence, whereas several of the other ballads in the same collection, find exact counterparts in the KIEMPE VISER. Which may have been the originals will be a question for future antiquarians. Mr Jamieson, to secure the power of literal translation, has adopted the old Scottish idiom, which approaches so near to that of the Danish, as almost to give word for word, as well as line for line, and indeed in many verses the orthography alone is altered. As *Wester Haf*, mentioned in the first stanza of the ballad, means the *West Sea*, in opposition to the Baltic, or *East Sea*, Mr Jamieson inclines to be of opinion, that the scene of the dis-enchantment is laid in one of the Orkney or Hebride Islands. To each verse in the original is added a burden, having a kind of meaning of its

own, but not applicable, at least not uniformly applicable, to the sense of the stanza to which it is subjoined: this is very common both in Danish and Scottish song.

THE ELFIN GRAY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 143, AND FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1591.

Der ligger en vold i Vester Haf,
Der agter en bondè at biggè:
Hand förer did baadè hög og hund,
Og agter dar om vinteren at liggè.
(DE VILDE DIUR OG DIURENE UDI SKOFVEN.)

1.

There liggs a wold in Wester Haf,
There a husbande means to bigg,
And thither he carries baith hawk and hound,
There meaning the winter to ligg.
(*The wild deer and daes i' the shaw out.*)

2.

He taks wi' him baith hound and cock,
The langer he means to stay,
The wild deer in the shaws that are
May sairly rue the day.
(*The wild deer*, &c.)

3.

He's hew'd the beech, and he's fell'd the aik,
Sae has he the poplar gray:
And grim in mood was the growsome elf,
That be sae bald he may.

4.

He hew'd him kipples, he hew'd him bawks,
Wi' mickle moil and haste;
Syne speer'd the elf in the knock that bade,
"Wha's hacking here sae fast?"

5.

Syne up and spak the weiest elf,
Crean'd as an immert sma:
"It's here is come a christian man;—
I'll fley him or he ga."

6.

It's up syne started the firsten elf,
And glowr'd about sae grim:
"It's we'll awa' to the husbande's house,
And hald a court on him.

7.

"Here hews he down baith skugg and shaw,
And wirks us skaith and scorn:
His huswife he shall gie to me;
They's rue the day they were born!"

8.

The elfen a' i' the knock that were
Gaed dancing in a string;
They nighed near the husband's house;—
Sae lang their tails did hing.

9.

The hound he yowls i' the yard;
The herd toots in his horn;
The earn scraichs, and the cock craws,
As the husbande had gi'en him his corn.[1]

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[1] *This singular quatrain stands thus in the original:*
"Hunden hand giör i gaarden;
Hiorden tudè i sit horn;
Œrnen skriger, og hanen galer,
Som bonden hafdè gifvet sit korn."

10.

The Elfen were five score and seven,
  Sae laidly and sae grim;
And they the husbande's guests maun be,
  To eat and drink wi' him.

11.

The husbande out o' Villenshaw
  At his winnock the Elves can see:
"Help me, now, Jesu, Mary's son;
  Thir Elves they mint at me!"

12.

In every nook a cross he coost,
  In his chalmer maist ava;
The Elfen a' were fley'd thereat,
  And flew to the wild-wood shaw.

13.

And some flew east, and some flew west,
  And some to the norwast flew;
And some they flew to the deep dale down,
  There still they are, I trow.[1]

14.

It was then the weiest Elf,
  In at the door braids he;
Agast was the husbande, for that Elf
  For cross nor sign wad flee.

15.

The huswife she was a canny wife,
  She set the Elf at the board;
She set before him baith ale and meat,
  Wi' mony a well-waled word.

---

[1] *In the Danish :*
"Sommè flöyè oster, og sommè flöyè vester,
  Noglè flöyè nör paa;
Noglè flöyè ned i dybenè dalè,
  Jeg troer de erè der endnu."

"Hear thou, Gudeman o' Villenshaw,
What now I say to thee;
Wha bade thee bigg within our bounds,
Without the leave o' me?

17.

"But, an thou in our bounds will bigg,
And bide, as well as may be,
Then thou thy dearest huswife maun
To me for a lemman gie."

18.

Up spak the luckless husbande then,
As God the grace him gae:
"Eline she is to me sae dear,
Her thou may na-gate hae."

19.

Till the Elf he answer'd as he couth:
"Lat but my huswife be,
And tak whate'er o' gude or gear
Is mine, awa wi' thee."

20.

"Then I'll thy Eline tak and thee
Aneath my feet to tread;
And hide thy goud and white monie
Aneath my dwalling-stead."

21.

The husbande and his househald a'
In sary rede they join:
"Far better that she be now forfairn,
Nor that we a' should tyne."

22.

Up, will of rede, the husbande stood
Wi' heart fu' sad and sair;
And he has gien his huswife Eline
Wi' the young Elf to fare.

12

23.

Then blyth grew he, and sprang about;
He took her in his arm:
The rud it left her comely cheek;
Her heart was clem'd wi' harm.

24.

A waefu' woman than she was ane,
And the moody tears loot fa':
"God rew on me, unseely wife,
How hard a wierd I fa!

25.

"My fay I plight to the fairest wight
That man on mold mat see;
Maun I now mell wi' a laidly El,
His light lemman to be?"

26.

He minted ance—he minted twice,
Wae wax'd her heart that syth:
Syne the laidliest fiend he grew that e'er
To mortal ee did kyth.

27.

When he the thirden time can mint,
To Mary's son she pray'd,
And the laidly elf was clean awa,
And a fair knight in his stead.

28.

This fell under a linden green,
That again his shape he found;
O' wae and care was the word nae mair,
A' were sae glad that stound.

29.

"O dearest Eline, hear thou this,
And thou my wife sal be,
And a' the goud in merry England
Sae freely I'll gie thee.

30.

" Whan I was but a little wee bairn,
My mither died me frae ;
My stepmither sent me awa frae her ;
I turn'd till an *Elfin Gray.*

31.

" To thy husband I a gift will gie,
Wi' mickle state and gear,
As mends for Eline his huswife ;—
Thou's be my heartis dear."

32.

" Thou nobil knyght, we thank now God
That has freed us frae skaith ;
Sae wed thou thee a maiden free,
And joy attend ye baith !

33.

" Sin I to thee na maik can be,
My dochter may be thine ;
And thy gude will right to fulfill,
Lat this be our propine."

34.

" I thank thee, Eline, thou wise woman ;
My praise thy worth sall hae ;
And thy love gin I fail to win,
Thou here at hame sall stay."

35.

The husbande biggit now on his öe,
And nae ane wrought him wrang ;
is dochter wore crown in Engeland,
And happy liv'd and lang.

36.

Now Eline the husbande's huswife has
Cour'd a' her grief and harms ;
She's mither to a noble queen
That sleeps in a kingis arms.

2

GLOSSARY.

St. 1. *Wold*, a wood; a woody fastness.

Husbande, from the Dan. *hos*, with, and *bonde*, a villain, or bondsman, who was a cultivator of the ground, and could not quit the estate to which he was attached, without the permission of his lord. This is the sense of the word, in the old Scottish records. In the Scottish "Burghe Laws," translated from the *Rej. Majest.* (Auchinleck MS. in the Adv. Lib.) it is used indiscriminately with the Dan. and Swed. *bondè*.

Bigg, build.

Ligg, lie.

Daes, does.

2. *Shaw*, wood.

Sairly, sorely.

3. *Aik*, oak.

Grousome, terrible.

Bald, bold.

Kipples, (couples,) beams joined at the top, for supporting a roof, in building.

Bawks, balks; cross beams.

Moil, laborious industry.

Speer'd, asked.

Knock, hillock.

5. *Weiest*, smallest.

Crean'd, shrunk, diminished; from the Gaëlic, *crian*, very small.

Immert, emmit; ant.

Christian, used in the Danish ballads, &c. in contradistinction to *demoniac*, as it is in England, in contradistinction to *brute*; in which sense, a person of the lower class, in England, would call a *Jew* or a *Turk*, a *Christian*.

Fley, frighten.

6. *Glowr'd*, stared.

Hald, hold.

7. *Skugg*, shade.

Skaith, harm.

8. *Nighed*, approached.

9. *Yowls*, howls.

Toots—in the Dan. *tude*, is applied both to the howling of a dog, and the sound of a horn.

Scraichs, screams.

10. *Laidly*, loathly; disgustingly *ugly*.

Grim, fierce.

11. *Winnock*, window.

Mint, aim at.

12. *Coost*, cast.

Chalmer, chamber.

Maist, most.

Ava, of all.

13. *Norwart*, northward.

Trow, believe.

14. *Braids*, strides quickly forward.
Wad, would.
15. *Canny*, adroit.
Mony, many.
Well-waled, well chosen.
17. *An*, if.
Bide, abide.
Lemman, mistress.
18. *Nagate*, nowise.
19. *Couth*, could; knew how to.
Lat be, let alone.
Gude, goods; property.
20. *Aneath*, beneath.
Dwalling-stead, dwelling-place.
21. *Sary*, sorrowful.
Rede, counsel; consultation.
Forfairn, forlorn; lost; *gone*.
Tyne, (verb neut.) be lost; perish.
22. *Will of rede*, bewildered in thought; in the Danish original "*vildraadige*;" Lat. "inops *consilii*;" Gr. 'απορων. This expression is left among the *desiderata* in the Glossary to Ritson's Romances, and has never been explained. It is obsolete in the Danish as well as in English.
Fare, go.
23. *Rud*, red of the cheek.
Clem'd, in the Danish, *klemt*; (which, in the north of England, is still in use, as the word *starved* is with us;) brought to a dying state. It is used by our old comedians.
Harm, grief; as in the original, and in the old Teutonic, English, and Scottish poetry.
24. *Waefu*, woeful.
Moody, strongly and wilfully passionate.
Rew, take ruth; pity.
Unseely, unhappy; unblest.
Wierd, fate.
Fa, (Isel. Dan. and Swed.) take; get; acquire; procure; have for my lot.—This Gothic verb answers, in its direct and secondary significations, exactly to the Latin *capio*; and Allan Ramsay was right in his definition of it. It is quite a different word from *fa'*, an abbreviation of *'fall*, or *befall*; and is the principal root in FANGEN, to *fang*, take, or lay hold of.
25. *Fay*, faith.
Mold, mould; earth.
Mat, mote; might.
Maun, must.
Mell, mix.
El, an elf. This term, in the Welch, signifies *what has in itself the power of motion; a moving principle; an intelligence; a spirit; an angel*. In the Hebrew, it bears the same import.
26. *Minted*, attempted; meant; shewed a *mind*, or intention to. The original is:

" Hand *mindte* hende först—og
anden gang;—
Hun giordis i hiortet sa vee:

End blef hand den *lediste* diefvel
Mand kunde med oyen see.
Der hand vilde *minde* den tredie
gang," &c.

Syth, tide; time.

Kyth, appear.

28. *Stound*, hour; time; moment.

29. *Merry*, (old Teut. *meré*,) famous; renowned; answering, in its etymological meaning, exactly to the Latin *mactus*. Hence *merry-men*, as the address of a chief to his followers; meaning n[illegible] men of mirth, but of renown. The term is found in its original sense in the Gaël. *már*, and the Welsh *mawr*, great; and in the oldest Teut. Romances, *mar*, *mer*, and *mere*, have sometimes the same signification.

31. *Mends*, amends; recompence.

33. *Maik*, match; peer; equal.

Propine, pledge; gift.

35. *öe*, an island of the *second* magnitude; an island of the *first* magnitude being called a *land*, and one of the *third* magnitude a *holm*.

36. *Cour'd*, recover'd.

THE

GHAIST'S WARNING.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DANISH KÆMPE VISER, p. 721.

By the permission of Mr Jamieson, this ballad is added from the same curious Collection. It contains some passages of great pathos.

Svend Dyring hand rider sig op under öè,
(Varè jeg selver ung)
Der fæstè hand sig saa ven en möè.
(Mig lyster udi lunden at ridè,) &c.

Child Dyring has ridden him up under öe,*
(And O gin I were young!)
There wedded he him sae fair † a may.
(I' the greenwood it lists me to ride.)

---

* "Under öe."—The original expression has been preserved here and elsewhere, because no other could be found to supply its place. There is just as much meaning in it in the translation as in the original; but it is a standard Danish ballad phrase, and as such, it is hoped, will be allowed to pass.

† "Fair."—The Dan. and Swed. *ven*, *væn*, or *vennè*, and the Gaël. *bân*, in the oblique cases *bhân* (*vân*,) is the origin of the Scottish *bonny*, which has so much puzzled all the etymologists.

Thegither they liv'd for seven lang year,
(And O, &c.)
And they seven bairns hae gotten in fere.
(I' the greenwood, &c.)

Sae Death's come there intill that stead,
And that winsome lily flower is dead.

That swain he has ridden him up under öe,
And syne he has married anither may.

He's married a may, and he's fessen her hame;
But she was a grim and a laidly dame.

When into the castell court drave she,
The seven bairns stuid wi' the tear in their ee.

The bairns they stood wi' dule and dout:
*   *   *   *   *   *   *

Nor ale nor mead to the bairnies she gave:
" But hunger and hate frae me ye's have."

She took frae them the bowster blae,
And said, " Ye sall ligg i' the bare strae!"

She took frae them the groff wax light;
Says, " Now ye sall ligg i' the mirk a' night!"

'Twas lang i' the night, and the bairnies grat:
Their mither she under the mools heard that;

That heard the wife under the eard that lay:
" Forsooth maun I to my bairnies gae!"

That wife can stand up at our lord's knee,
And " may I gang and my bairnies see?"

She prigged sae sair, and she prigged sae lang,
That he at the last gae her leave to gang.

"And thou sall come back whan the cock does craw,
For thou nae langer sall bide awa."

Wi' her banes sae stark, a bowt she gae;
She's riven baith wa' and marble gray.*

Whan near to the dwalling she can gang,
The dogs they wow'd till the lift it rang.

Whan she came till the castell yett,
Her eldest dochter stood thereat.

"Why stand ye here, dear dochter mine?
How are sma brithers and sisters thine?"

"For sooth ye're a woman baith fair and fine;
But ye are nae dear mither of mine."

"Och! how should I be fine or fair?
My cheek it is pale, and the ground's my lair."

"My mither was white, wi' lire sae red;
But thou art wan, and liker ane dead."

"Och! how should I be white and red,
Sae lang as I've been cauld and dead?"

---

* The original of this and the following stanza is very fine:

"Hun sköd op sinè modigè been,
Der revenedè muur og graa marmorsteen."
"Der hun gik igennem den by,
De hundè de tudè saa höjt i sky."

When she cam till the chalmer in,
Down the bairns' cheeks the tears did rin.

She buskit the tane, and she brush'd it there;
She kem'd and plaited the tither's hair.

The thirden she doodl'd upon her knee,
And the fourthen * * * * *

She's ta'en the fiften upon her lap,
And sweetly * * * * * *

Till her eldest dochter syne said she,
"Ye bid Child Dyring come here to me."

Whan he cam till the chalmer in,
Wi' angry mood she said to him:

"I left you routh o' ale and bread;
My bairnies quail for hunger and need.

"I left ahind me braw bowsters blae;
My bairnies are liggin i' the bare strae.

"I left ye sae mony a groff wax light;
My bairnies ligg i' the mark a' night.

"Gin aft I come back to visit thee,
Wae, dowy, and weary thy luck shall be."

Up spak little Kirstin in bed that lay:
"To thy bairnies I'll do the best I may."

Ay when they heard the dog nir and bell,
Sae gae they the bairnies bread and ale.

Ay whan the dog did wow, in haste
They cross'd and sain'd themsells frae the ghaist.

Ay when the little dog yowl'd wi' fear,
(And O gin I were young!)
They shook at the thought that the dead was near,
(I' the greenwood it lists me to ride,)
or,
(Fair words softening a heart they shaw.)

GLOSSARY.

St. 1. *May*, maid.
Lists, pleases.
2. *Stead*, place.
3. *Bairns*, children.
In fere, together.
Winsome, engaging; giving joy, (old Teut.)
4. *Syne*, then.
5. *Fessen*, fetched; brought.
6. *Drave*, drove.
7. *Dule*, sorrow.
Dout, fear.
9. *Bowster*, bolster; cushion; bed.
Blae, blue.
Strae, straw.
10. *Groff*, great; large in girt.
Mark, mirk; dark.
11. *Lang i' the night*, late.
Grat, wept.
Mools, mould; earth.
12. *Eard*, earth.
Gae, go.
14. *Prigged*, entreated earnestly and perseveringly.
Gang, go.
15. *Craw*, crow.
16. *Banes*, bones.
Stark, strong.
Bowt, bolt; elastic spring, like that of a *bolt* or *arrow* from a bow.
Riven, split asunder.
Wa', wall.
17. *Wow'd*, howled.
Lift, sky; firmament; *air*.
18. *Yett*, gate.
19. *Sma*, small.
22. *Lire*, complexion.
23. *Cald*, cold.
24. *Till*, to.
Rin, run.
25. *Buskit*, dressed.
Kem'd, combed.
Tither, the other.
28. *Routh*, plenty.
Quail, are quelled; die.
Need, want.
29. *Ahind*, behind.
Braw, brave; fine.
31. *Dowy*, sorrowful.
33. *Nirr*, snarl.
Bell, bark.
34. *Sained*, blessed; literally, *signed* with the *sign* of the cross. Before the introduction of Christianity, *Runes* were used in *saining*, as a spell against the power of enchantment and evil genii.
Ghaist, ghost.

Note VII.

Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who won'd within the hill.—St. XII. p. 160.

In a long dissertation upon the Fairy superstition, published in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, the most valuable part of which was supplied by my learned and indefatigable friend Dr John Leyden, most of the circumstances are collected which can throw light upon the popular belief which even yet prevails respecting them in Scotland. Dr Grahame, author of an entertaining work upon the Scenery of the Perthshire Highlands, already frequently quoted, has recorded, with great accuracy, the peculiar tenets held by the Highlanders on this topic, in the vicinity of Loch-Katrine. The learned author is inclined to deduce the whole mythology from the Druidical system,—an opinion to which there are many objections.

"The *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace of the Highlanders, though not absolutely malevolent, are believed to be a peevish, repining race of beings, who, possessing themselves but a scanty portion of happiness, are supposed to envy mankind their more complete and substantial enjoyment. They are supposed to enjoy, in their subterraneous recesses, a sort of shadowy happiness,—a tinsel grandeur; which, however, they would willingly exchange for the more solid joys of mortality.

"They are believed to inhabit certain round grassy eminences, where they celebrate their nocturnal festivities by the

light of the moon. About a mile beyond the source of the Forth, above Lochcon, there is a place called *Coirshi'an*, or the Cove of the Men of Peace, which is still supposed to be a favourite place of their residence. In the neighbourhood, are to be seen many round conical eminences; particularly one, near the head of the lake, by the skirts of which many are still afraid to pass after sunset. It is believed, that if, on Hallow-eve, any person, alone, goes round one of these hills nine times, towards the left hand (*sinistrorsum*), a door shall open, by which he shall be admitted into their subterraneous abodes. Many, it is said, of mortal race have been entertained in their secret recesses. There they have been received into the most splendid apartments, and regaled with the most sumptuous banquets, and delicious wines. Their females surpass the daughters of men in beauty. The *seemingly* happy inhabitants pass their time in festivity, and in dancing to notes of the softest music. But unhappy is the mortal who joins in their joys, or ventures to partake of their dainties. By this indulgence, he forfeits for ever the society of men, and is bound down irrevocably to the condition of Shi'ich, or man of peace.

"A woman, as is reported in the Highland tradition, was conveyed, in days of yore, into the secret recesses of the men of peace. There she was recognised by one who had formerly been an ordinary mortal, but who had, by some fatality, become associated with the Shi'ichs. This acquaintance, still retaining some portion of human benevolence, warned her of

her danger, and counselled her, as she valued her liberty, to abstain from eating and drinking with them, for a certain space of time. She complied with the counsel of her friend; and when the period assigned was elapsed, she found herself again upon earth, restored to the society of mortals. It is added, that, when she examined the viands which had been presented to her, and which had appeared so tempting to the eye, they were found, now that the enchantment was removed, to consist only of the refuse of the earth."—P. 107—111.

Note VIII.

Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
Our moonlight circle's screen?
Or who comes here to chace the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?—St. XII. p. 161.

It has been already observed, that fairies, if not positively malevolent, are capricious, and easily offended. They are, like other proprietors of forests, peculiarly jealous of their rights of vert and venison, as appears from the cause of offence taken, in the original Danish ballad. This jealousy was also an attribute of the northern Duergar, or dwarfs; to many of whose distinctions the fairies seem to have succeeded, if, indeed, they are not the same class of beings. In the huge metrical record of German chivalry, entitled the Helden-Buch, Sir Hildebrand, and the other heroes of whom it treats, are engaged in one of their most desperate adventures, from a rash violation of the rose-garden of an Elfin, or Dwarf King.

There are yet traces of a belief in this worst and most malicious order of Fairies among the Border Wilds. Dr Leyden has introduced such a dwarf into his ballad entitled the Cout of Keeldar, and has not forgot his characteristic detestation of the chace.

"The third blast that young Keeldar blew,
Still stood the limber fern,
And a wee man, of swarthy hue,
Upstarted by a cairn.

"His russet weeds were brown as heath,
That clothes the upland fell;
And the hair of his head was frizzly red
As the purple heather-bell.

"An urchin, clad in prickles red,
Clung cow'ring to his arm;
The hounds they howl'd, and backward fled,
As struck by fairy charm.

"Why rises high the stag-hound's cry,
Where stag-hound ne'er should be?
Why wakes that horn the silent morn,
Without the leave of me?

"Brown dwarf, that o'er the muirland strays,
Thy name to Keeldar tell!"—
"The Brown Man of the Muirs, who stays
Beneath the heather-bell.

"'Tis sweet beneath the heather-bell
To live in autumn brown;
And sweet to hear the lav'rocks swell,
Far, far from tower and town.

"But woe betide the shrilling horn,
The chace's surly cheer!
And ever that hunter is forlorn,
Whom first at morn I hear."

The poetical picture here given of the Dwerger corresponds exactly with the following Northumbrian legend, with which I was lately favoured by my learned and kind friend, Mr Surtees of Mainsforth, who has bestowed indefatigable labour upon the antiquities of the English border counties. The subject is in itself so curious, that the length of the note will, I hope, be pardoned.

"I have only one record to offer of the appearance of our Northumbrian Duergar. My narratrix is Elizabeth Cockburn, an old wife of Offerton, in this county, whose credit, in a case of this kind, will not, I hope, be much impeached, when I add, that she is, by her dull neighbours, supposed to be occasionally insane, but, by herself, to be at those times endowed with a faculty of seeing visions, and spectral appearances, which shun the common ken.

"In the year before the great rebellion, two young men from Newcastle were sporting on the high moors above Elsdon, and after pursuing their game several hours, sat down to dine in a green glen, near one of the mountain streams. After their repast, the younger lad ran to the brook for water, and after stooping to drink, was surprised, on lifting his head again, by the appearance of a brown dwarf, who stood on a crag covered with brackens, across the burn. This extraordinary per-

sonage did not appear to be above half the stature of a common man, but was uncommonly stout and broad built, having the appearance of vast strength. His dress was entirely brown, the colour of the brackens, and his head covered with frizzled red hair. His countenance was expressive of the most savage ferocity, and his eyes glared like a bull. It seems, he addressed the young man first, threatening him with his vengeance, for having trespassed on his demesnes, and asking him, if he knew in whose presence he stood? The youth replied, that he now supposed him to be the lord of the moors; that he offended through ignorance; and offered to bring him the game he had killed. The dwarf was a little mollified by this submission, but remarked, that nothing could be more offensive to him than such an offer, as he considered the wild animals as his subjects, and never failed to avenge their destruction. He condescended further to inform him, that he was, like himself, mortal, though of years far exceeding the lot of common humanity; and (what I should not have had an idea of) that he hoped for salvation. He never, he added, fed on any thing that had life, but lived, in the summer, on whortleberries, and in winter, on nuts and apples, of which he had great store in the woods. Finally, he invited his new acquaintance to accompany him home, and partake his hospitality; an offer which the youth was on the point of accepting, and was just oing to spring across the brook, (which if he had done, says lizabeth, the dwarf would certainly have torn him in pieces,) hen his foot was arrested by the voice of his companion,

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who thought he tarried long; and on looking round again, "the wee brown man was fled." The story adds, that he was imprudent enough to slight the admonition, and to sport over the moors, on his way homewards; but, soon after his return, he fell into a lingering disorder, and died within the year."

Note IX.

Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairy's fatal green.—St. XII. p. 161.

As the *Daoine Shi'*, or Men of Peace, wore green habits, they were supposed to take offence when any mortals ventured to assume their favourite colour. Indeed, from some reason, which has been, perhaps, originally a general superstition, *green* is held in Scotland to be unlucky to particular tribes and counties. The Caithness men, who hold this belief, allege, as a reason, that their bands wore that colour when they were cut off at the battle of Flodden; and for the same reason they avoid crossing the Ord on a Monday, being the day of the week on which their ill-omened array set forth. Green is also disliked by those of the name of Ogilvy; but more especially is it held fatal to the whole clan of Grahame. It is remembered of an aged gentleman of that name, that when his horse fell in a fox-chase, he accounted for it at once by observing, that the whip-cord attached to his lash was of this unlucky colour.

Note X.

For thou wert christen'd man.—St. XII. p. 161.

The Elves were supposed greatly to envy the privileges acquired by Christian initiation, and they gave to those mortals who had fallen into their power, a certain precedence, founded upon this advantageous distinction. Tamlane, in the old ballad, describes his own rank in the fairy procession:—

> " For I ride on a milk-white steed,
> And aye nearest the town;
> Because I was a christened knight,
> hey gie me that renown."

I presume, that, in the Danish ballad, the obstinacy of the "Weiest Elf," who would not flee for cross or sign, is to be derived from the circumstance of his having been "christen'd man."

How eager the elves were to obtain for their offspring the prerogatives of Christianity, will be proved by the following story: "In the district called Haga, in Iceland, dwelt a nobleman called Sigward Forster, who had an intrigue with one of the subterranean females. The elf became pregnant, and exacted from her lover a firm promise that he would procure the baptism of the infant. At the appointed time, the mother came to the church-yard, on the wall of which she placed a golden cup, and a stole for the priest, agreeable to the custom of making an offering at baptism. She then stood a little apart. When the priest left the church, he enquired the

meaning of what he saw, and demanded of Sigward, if he avowed himself the father of the child. But Sigward, ashamed of the connection, denied the paternity. He was then interrogated if he desired that the child should be baptized; but this also he answered in the negative, lest, by such request, he should admit himself to be the father. On which the child was left untouched, and unbaptized. Whereupon the mother, in extreme wrath, snatched up the infant and the cup, and retired, leaving the priestly cope, of which fragments are still in preservation. But this female denounced and imposed upon Sigward, and his posterity, to the ninth generation, a singular disease, with which many of his descendants are afflicted at this day." Thus wrote Einar Gudmund, pastor of the parish of Garpsdale, in Iceland, a man profoundly versed in learning, from whose manuscript it was extracted by the learned Torfæus.—*Historia Hrolfi Krakii, Hafniæ*, 1715, *prefatio.*

Note XI.

And gaily shines the fairy land;
But all is glistening show.—St. XV. p. 163.

No fact respecting Fairy-land seems to be better ascertained than the fantastic and illusory nature of their apparent pleasure and splendour. It has been already noticed, in the former quotations from Dr Grahame's entertaining volume, and may be confirmed by the following Highland tradition. "A woman, whose new-born child had been conveyed by them into their secret abodes, was also carried thither herself, to re-

main, however, only until she should suckle her infant. She, one day, during this period, observed the Shi'ichs busily employed in mixing various ingredients in a boiling cauldron; and, as soon as the composition was prepared, she remarked that they all carefully anointed their eyes with it, laying the remainder aside for future use. In a moment when they were all absent, she also attempted to anoint her eyes with the precious drug, but had time to apply it to one eye only, when the *Daoine Shi* returned. But with that eye she was henceforth enabled to see every thing as it really passed in their secret abodes:—she saw every object, not as she hitherto had done, in deceptive splendour and elegance, but in its genuine colours and form. The gaudy ornaments of the apartment were reduced to the walls of a gloomy cavern. Soon after, having discharged her office, she was dismissed to her own home. Still, however, she retained the faculty of seeing, with her medicated eye, every thing that was done, any where in her presence, by the deceptive art of the order. One day, amidst a throng of people, she chanced to observe the *Shi'ich*, or man of peace, in whose possession she had left her child; though to every other eye invisible. Prompted by maternal affection, she inadvertently accosted him, and began to enquire after the welfare of her child. The man of peace, astonished at being thus recognised by one of mortal race, demanded how she had been enabled to discover him. Awed by the terrible frown of his countenance, she acknowledged

what she had done. He spat in her eye, and extinguished it for ever."—GRAHAME'S *Sketches*, p. 116—118. It is very remarkable, that this story, translated by Dr Grahame from popular Gælic tradition, is to be found in the Otia Imperialia of Gervase of Tilbury. A work of great interest might be compiled upon the origin of popular fiction, and the transmission of similar tales from age to age, and from country to country. The mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next century, and that into the nursery-tale of the subsequent ages. Such an investigation, while it went greatly to diminish our ideas of the richness of human invention, would also shew, that these fictions, however wild and childish, possess such charms for the populace, as enable them to penetrate into countries unconnected by manners and language, and having no apparent intercourse, to afford the means of transmission. It would carry me far beyond my bounds, to produce instances of this community of fable, among nations who never borrowed from each other any thing intrinsically worth learning. Indeed the wide diffusion of popular fictions may be compared to the facility with which straws and feathers are dispersed abroad by the wind, while valuable metals cannot be transported without trouble and labour. There lives, I believe, only one gentleman, whose unlimited acquaintance with this subject might enable him to do it justice; I mean my friend Mr Francis Douce, of the British Museum, whose usual kindness will, I hope, pardon my

mentioning his name, while on a subject so closely connected with his extensive and curious researches.

Note XII.

——I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And 'twixt life and death was snatch'd away,
To the joyless fairy bower.

The subjects of Fairy Land were recruited from the regions of humanity by a sort of *crimping* system, which extended to adults as well as to infants. Many of those who were in this world supposed to have discharged the debt of nature, had only become denizens of the "Londe of Faery." In the beautiful fairy Romance of Orfee and Heurodiis (Orpheus and Eurydice) in the Auchinleck MS. is the following striking enumeration of persons thus abstracted from middle earth. Mr Ritson unfortunately published this romance from a copy in which the following, and many other highly poetical passages, do not occur:

"Then he gan biholde aboute al,
And seighe ful liggeand within the wal,
Of folk that wer thidder y-brought,
And thought dede and ne're nought;
Some stode withouten hadde;
And sum none armes nade;
And sum thurch the bodi hadde wounde;
And sum lay wode y-bounde;
And sum armed on hors sete;
And sum astrangled as thai ete;

And sum war in water adreynt;
And sum with fire al for-schreynt;
Wives ther lay on childe bedde;
Sum dede, and sum awedde;
And wonder fele ther lay besides,
Right as thai slepe her undertides;
Eche was thus in this warld y-nome,
With fairi thider y-come."

Note XIII.

Though space and law the stag we lend,

Who ever reck'd where, how, or when,
The prowling fox was trapped and slain.—St. XXX. p. 185.

St John actually used this illustration when engaged in confuting the plea of law proposed for the unfortunate Earl of Strafford: "It was true, we give laws to hares and deer, because they are beasts of chace; but it was never accounted either cruelty or foul play, to knock foxes or wolves on the head as they can be found, because they are beasts of prey.' In a word, the law and humanity were alike; the one being more fallacious, and the other more barbarous, than in any age had been vented in such an authority."—CLARENDON'S *History of the Rebellion.* Oxford, 1702. fol. vol. I. p. 183.

Note XIV.

————*his Highland cheer,*
The harden'd flesh of mountain-deer.—St. XXXI. p. 186.

The Scottish Highlanders, in former times, had a concise

mode of cooking their venison, or rather of dispensing with cooking it, which appears greatly to have surprised the French, whom chance made acquainted with it. The Vidame of Chartres, when a hostage in England, during the reign of Edward VI., was permitted to travel into Scotland, and penetrated as far as to the remote Highlands, (*au fin fond des Sauvages.*) After a great hunting party, at which a most wonderful quantity of game was destroyed, he saw these *Scottish savages* devour a part of their venison raw, without any further preparation than compressing it between two battons of wood, so as to force out the blood, and render it extremely hard. This they reckoned a great delicacy; and when the Vidame partook of it, his compliance with their taste rendered him extremely popular. This curious trait of manners was communicated by Mons. de Montmorency, a great friend of the Vidame, to Brantome, by whom it is recorded in *Vies des Hommes Illustres Discours*, LXXXIX. art. 14. The process by which the raw venison was rendered eatable is described very minutely in the romance of Perceforest, where Estonne, a Scottish knight-errant, having slain a deer, says to his companion Claudius: "Sire, or mangerez vous et moy aussi. Voire si nous auions de feu, dit Claudius. Par l'ame de mon pere, dist Estonne, ie vous atourneray et cuiray a la maniere de nostre pays comme pour cheualier errant. Lors tira son espee et sen vint a la branche dung arbre, et y fait vng grant trou, et puis fend al branche bien deux piedz et boute la cuisse du cerf entredeux,

et puis prent le licol de son cheval et en lye la branche et destraint si fort que le sang et les humeurs de la chair saillent hors et demeure la chair doulce et seiche. Lors prent la chair et oste ius le cuir et la chaire demeure aussi blanche comme si ce feust dung chappon. Dont dist a Claudius, Sire ie la vous ay cuiste a la guise de mon pays, vous en pouez manger hardyement, car ie mangeray premier. Lors met sa main a sa selle en vng lieu quil y auoit, et tire hors sel et poudre de poiure et gingembre, mesle ensemble, et le iecte dessus, et le frote sus bien fort, puis le couppe a moytie, et en donne a Claudius l'une des pieces, et puis mort en l'autre aussi sauoureusement quil est aduis que il an feist la pouldre voller. Quant Claudius veit quil le mangeoit de tel goust il en print grant fain et commence a manger tresvoulentiers, et dist a Estonne: Par l'ame de moy ie ne mangeay oncquesmais de chair atournee de telle guise: mais doresenauant ie ne me retourneroye pas hors de mon chemin par auoir la cuite. Sire, dist Estonne, quant ie suis en desers d'Escosse, dont ie suis seigneur, ie cheuaucheray huit iours ou quinze que ie n'entreray en chastel ne en maison, et si ne verray feu ne personne viuant fors que bestes sauuages, et de celles mangeray atournees en ceste maniere, et mieulx me plaira que la viande de l'empereur. Ainsi sen vont mangeant et cheuauchant iusques adonc quilz arriuerent sur une moult belle fontaine qui estoit en vne valee. Quant Estonne la vit il dist a Claudius, allons boire a ceste fontaine. Or beuuons, dist Estonne, du boire que le grant dieu

a pourueu a toutes gens, et qui me plaist mieulx que les ceruoises d'Angleterre."—*La Treselegante Hystoire du tresnoble Roy Perceforest.* Paris, 1531, fol. tome I. fol. lv. vers.

After all, it may be doubted whether *la chaire nostree*, for so the French called the venison thus summarily prepared, was any thing more than a mere rude kind of deer-ham.

NOTES TO CANTO FIFTH.

Note I.

Nor then claim'd sovereignty his due,
While Albany, with feeble hand,
Held borrow'd truncheon of command.—St. VI. p. 198.

There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden, and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed. "There arose," says Pitscottie, "great trouble and deadly feuds in many parts of Scotland, both in the north and west parts. The Master of Forbes, in the north, slew the Laird of Meldrum under tryst, (i. e. *at an agreed and secured meeting* :) Likewise, the Laird of Drummelzier slew the Lord Fleming at the hawking; and, likewise, there was slaughter among many other great lords," p. 121. Nor was

the matter much mended under government of the Earl of Angus; for though he caused the king to ride through all Scotland, "under pretence and colour of justice, to punish thief and traitor, none were found greater than were in their own company. And none at that time durst strive with a Douglas, nor yet with a Douglas's man, for if they did, they got the worse. Therefore, none durst plainzie of no extortion, theft, reiff, nor slaughter done to them by the Douglasses, or their men; in that cause they were not heard, so long as the Douglasses had the court in guiding."—*Ibid.* p. 133.

Note II.

The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.—St. VII. p. 200.

The ancient Highlanders verified in their practice the lines of Gray:—

An iron race the mountain cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain;
For where unwearied sinews must be found,
With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground;
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood;
To tame the savage, rushing from the wood;
What wonder if, to patient valour train'd,
They guard with spirit what by strength they gain'd;
And while their rocky ramparts round they see
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow,)
Insult the plenty of the vales below?

Fragment on the Alliance of Education and Government.

So far, indeed, was a *Creagh*, or foray, from being held dis-

graceful, that a young chief was always expected to shew his talents for command so soon as he assumed it, by leading his clan on a successful enterprise of this nature, either against a neighbouring sept, for which constant feuds usually furnished an apology, or against the *Sassenach*, Saxons, or Lowlanders, for which no apology was necessary. The Gael, great traditional historians, never forgot that the Lowlands had, at some remote period, been the property of their Celtic forefathers, which furnished an ample vindication of all the ravages that they could make on the unfortunate districts which lay within their reach. Sir James Grant of Grant is in possession of a letter of apology from Cameron of Lochiel, whose men had committed some depredation upon a farm called Moines, occupied by one of the Grants. Lochiel assures Grant, that, however the mistake had happened, his instructions were precise, that the party should foray the province of Moray, (a Lowland district,) where, as he coolly observes, " all men take their prey."

Note III.

———— I only meant
To shew the reed on which you leant,
Deeming this path you might pursue
Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.—St. XI. p. 206.

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the incon-

sistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy. The following story I can only quote from tradition, but with such an assurance from those by whom it was communicated, as permits me little doubt of its authenticity. Early in the last century, John Gunn, a noted Catheran, or Highland robber, infested Inverness-shire, and levied *black mail* up to the walls of the provincial capital. A garrison was then maintained in the castle of that town, and their pay (country banks being unknown) was usually transmitted in specie, under the guard of a small escort. It chanced that the officer who commanded this little party was unexpectedly obliged to halt, about thirty miles from Inverness, at a miserable inn. About night-fall, a stranger, in the Highland dress, and of very prepossessing appearance, entered the same house. Separate accommodation being impossible, the Englishman offered the newly-arrived guest a part of his supper, which was accepted with reluctance. By the conversation, he found his new acquaintance knew well all the passes of the country, which induced him eagerly to request his company on the ensuing morning. He neither disguised his business and charge, nor his apprehensions of that celebrated freebooter, John Gunn. The Highlander hesitated a moment, and then frankly consented to be his guide. Forth they set in the morning; and in travelling through a solitary and dreary glen, the discourse again turned on John Gunn. "Would you like to see him?" said the guide; and, without waiting an answer to this alarm-

ing question, he whistled, and the English officer, with his small party, were surrounded by a body of Highlanders, whose numbers put resistance out of question, and who were all well armed. "Stranger," resumed the guide, "I am that very John Gunn by whom you feared to be intercepted, and not without cause; for I came to the inn last night with the express purpose of learning your route, that I and my followers might ease you of your charge by the road. But I am incapable of betraying the trust you reposed in me, and having convinced you that you were in my power, I can only dismiss you unplundered and uninjured." He then gave the officer directions for his journey, and disappeared with his party, as suddenly as they had presented themselves.

Note IV.

——— On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
Where Rome, the empress of the world,
Of yore her eagle wings unfurled.—St. XII. p. 207.

The torrent which discharges itself from Lord Vennachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and indeed on the plain itself, are some entrenchments which have been thought Roman. There is adjacent to Callender, a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp.

Note V.

See here, all vantageless I stand,

Armed, like thyself, with single brand.—St. XII. p. 208.

The duellists of former times did not always stand upon those punctilios respecting equality of arms, which are now judged essential to fair combat. It is true, that in formal combats in the lists, the parties were, by the judges of the field, put as nearly as possible in the same circumstances. But in private duel it was often otherwise. In that desperate combat which was fought between Quelus, a minion of Henry III. of France, and Antraguet, with two seconds on each side, from which only two persons escaped alive, Quelus complained that his antagonist had over him the advantage of a poniard which he used in parrying, while his left hand, which he was forced to employ for the same purpose, was cruelly mangled. When he charged Antraguet with this odds, "Thou hast done wrong," answered he, "to forget thy dagger at home. We are here to fight, and not to settle punctilios of arms." In a similar duel, however, a younger brother of the house of Aubayne, in Angoulesme, behaved more generously on the like occasion, and at once threw away his dagger when his enemy challenged it as an undue advantage. But at this time hardly any thing can be conceived more horridly brutal and savage, than the mode in which private quarrels were conducted in France. Those who were most jealous of the point of honour, and acquired the title of *Raffinés*, did not scruple to

take every advantage of strength, numbers, surprise, and arms, to accomplish their revenge. The Sieur de Brantome, to whose discourse on duels I am obliged for these particulars, gives the following account of the death and principles of his friend, the Baron de Vitaux :—

"J'ay oui conter à un Tireur d'armes, qui apprit à Millaud a en tirer, lequel s'appelloit le Seigneur Jacques Ferron, de la ville d'Ast, qui avoit esté à moy, il fut despuis tué à Saincte-Basille en Gascogne, lors que Monsieur du Mayne l'assiégea, lui servant d'Ingénieur ; et de malheur, je l'avois addressé audit Baron quelques trois mois auparavant, pour l'exercer à tirer, bien qu'il en sçeust prou ; mais il n'en fit conte : et le laissant, Millaud s'en servit, et le rendit fort adroit. Ce Seigneur Jacques donc me raconta, qu'il s'estoit monté sur un noyer, assez loing, pour en voir le combat, et qu'il ne vist jamais homme y aller plus bravement, ny plus résolument, ny de grace plus asseurée ny déterminée. Il commença de marcher de cinquante pas vers son ennemy, relevant souvent ses moustaches en haut d'une main ; et estant à vingt pas de son ennemy, (non plustost) il mit la main à l'espée qu'il tenoit en la main, non qu'il l'eust tirée encore ; mais en marchant, il fit voller le fourreau en l'air, en le secouans, ce qui est le beau de cela, et qui monstroit bien une grace de combat bien assieurée et froide, et nullement téméraire, comme il y en a qui tirent leurs espées de cinq cents pas de l'ennemy, voire de mille, comme j'en ay veu aucuns. Ainsi mourut ce brave Baron, le parangon de France, qu'on nommoit tel, à bien venger

ses querelles, par grandes et déterminées résolutions. Il n'estoit pas seulement estimé en France, mais en Italie, Espaigne, Allemaigne, en Boulogne et Angleterre: et desiroient fort les Estrangers, venant en France, le voir; car je l'ay veu, tant sa renommée volloit. Il estoit fort petit de corps, mais fort grand de courage. Ses ennemis disoient qu'il ne tuoit pas bien ses gens, que par advantages et supercheries. Certes, je tiens de grands capitaines, et mesme d' Italiens, qui sont estez d'autres fois les premiers vengeurs du monde, *in ogni modo*, disoient-ils, qui ont tenu cette maxime, qu'une supercherie ne se devoit payer que par semblable monnoye, et n'y alloit point la de déshonneur."—*Oeuvres de Brantome.* Paris, 1787-8. Tome VIII. p. 90-92. It may be necessary to inform the reader, that this paragon of France was the most foul assassin of his time, and had committed many desperate murders, chiefly by the assistance of his hired banditti; from which it may be conceived how little the point of honour of the period deserved its name. I have chosen to give my heroes, who are indeed of an earlier period, a stronger tincture of the spirit of chivalry.

Note VI.

Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
That on the field his targe he threw.—St. XV. p. 211.

A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops they re-

ceived the thrust of the bayonet in this buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broad-sword against the encumbered soldier. In the civil war of 1745, most of the front-rank of the clans were thus armed; and Captain Grose informs us, that, in 1747, the privates of the 42d regiment, then in Flanders, were for the most part permitted to carry targets.—*Military Antiquities*, vol. I. p. 164. A person thus armed had a considerable advantage in private fray. Among verses between Swift and Sheridan, lately published by Dr Barrett, there is an account of such an encounter, in which the circumstances, and consequently the relative superiority of the combatants, are precisely the reverse of those in the text:

A Highlander once fought a Frenchman at Margate,
The weapons, a rapier, a back-sword, and target;
Brisk Monsieur advanced as fast as he could,
But all his fine pushes were caught in the wood,
And Sawny, with back-sword, did slash him and nick him,
While t'other, enraged that he could not once prick him,
Cried, "Sirrah, you rascal, you son of a whore,
Me will fight you, be gar! if you ll come from your door."

Note VII.

For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,

Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.—St. XV. p. 212.

The use of defensive armour, and particularly of the buckler or target, was general in Queen Elizabeth's time, although that of the single rapier seems to have been occasionally prac-

tised much earlier.* Rowland Yorke, however, who betrayed the fort of Zutphen to the Spaniards, for which good service he was afterwards poisoned by them, is said to have been the first who brought the rapier-fight into general use. Fuller, speaking of the Swash-bucklers, or bullies of Queen Elizabeth's time, says, "West Smithfield was formerly called Ruffians' Hall, where such men usually met, casually or otherwise, to try *masteries* with sword and buckler. More were frightened than hurt, more hurt than killed therewith, it being accounted unmanly to strike beneath the knee. But since that desperate traitor Rowland Yorke first introduced thrusting with rapiers, sword and buckler are disused." In The Two Angry Women of Abingdon, a comedy, printed in 1599, we have a pathetic complaint:—"Sword and buckler fight begins to grow out of use. I am sorry for it: I shall never see good manhood again. If it be once gone, this poking fight of rapier and dagger will come up; then a tall man, and a good sword and buckler man, will be spitted like a cat or rabbit." But the rapier had upon the continent long superseded, in private duel, the use of sword and shield. The masters of the noble science of defence were chiefly Italians. They made great mystery of their art and mode of instruction, never suffered any person to be present but the scholar who was to be taught, and even examined closets, beds, and other places of possible

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* See Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare, vol. II. p. 61.

concealment. Their lessons often gave the most treacherous advantages; for the challenger, having the right to chuse his weapons, frequently selected some strange, unusual, and inconvenient kind of arms, the use of which he practised under these instructors, and thus killed at his ease his antagonist, to whom it was presented for the first time on the field of battle. See BRANTOME'S *Discourse on Duels*, and the work on the same subject, "*si gentement ecrit*," by the venerable Dr Paris de Puteo. The Highlanders continued to use broadsword and target until disarmed after the affair of 1745-6.

Note VIII.

Like mountain-cat, that guards her young,
Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung.—St. XVI. p. 213.

I have not ventured to render this duel so savagely desperate as that of the celebrated Sir Ewan of Lochiel, chief of the clan Cameron, called, from his sable complexion, Ewan Dhu. He was the last man in Scotland who maintained the royal cause during the great civil war, and his constant incursions rendered him a very unpleasant neighbour to the republican garrison at Inverlochy, now Fort William. The governor of the fort detached a party of three hundred men to lay waste Lochiel's possessions, and cut down his trees; but, in a sudden and desperate attack, made upon them by the chieftain, with very inferior numbers, they were almost all cut to pieces. The skirmish is detailed in a curious memoir of Sir Ewan's life, printed in the Appendix of Pennant's Scottish Tour.

"In this engagement, Lochiel himself had several wonderful escapes. In the retreat of the English, one of the strongest and bravest of the officers retired behind a bush, when he observed Lochiel pursuing, and seeing him unaccompanied with any, he leaped out, and thought him his prey. They met one another with equal fury. The combat was long and doubtful: the English gentleman had by far the advantage in strength and size; but Lochiel exceeding him in nimbleness and agility, in the end tript the sword out of his hand: they closed, and wrestled, till both fell to the ground, in each other's arms. The English officer got above Lochiel, and pressed him hard, but stretching forth his neck, by attempting to disengage himself, Lochiel, who by this time had his hands at liberty, with his left hand seized him by the collar, and jumping at his extended throat, he bit it with his teeth quite through, and kept such a hold of his grasp, that he brought away his mouthful: this, he said, was *the sweetest bite he ever had in his lifetime.*" —Vol. I. p. 375.

Note IX.

Ye towers! within whose circuit dread,
A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
That oft hast heard the death-axe sound!—St. XX. p. 220.

Stirling was often polluted with noble blood. It is thus apostrophized by J. Jonston:

——————— Discordia tristis
Heu quoties procerum sanguine tinxit humum!
Hoc uno infelix, at felix cetera, nusquam
Lætior aut cœli frons geniusve soli.

The fate of William, eighth Earl of Douglas, whom James II. stabbed in Stirling Castle with his own hand, and while under his royal safe-conduct, is familiar to all who read Scottish history. Murdack, Duke of Albany, Duncan, Earl of Lennox, his father-in-law, and his two sons, Walter and Alexander Stewart, were executed at Stirling, in 1425. They were beheaded upon an eminence without the castle walls, but making part of the same hill, from whence they could behold their strong castle of Doune, and their extensive possessions. This "heading-hill," as it was sometimes termed, bears commonly the less terrible name of Hurly-hacket, from its having been the scene of a courtly amusement alluded to by Sir David Lindsay, who says of the pastimes in which the young king was engaged,

"Some harled him to the Hurly-hacket;"

which consisted in sliding, in some sort of chair it may be supposed, from top to bottom of a smooth bank. The boys of Edinburgh, about twenty years ago, used to play at the hurly-hacket on the Calton-hill, using for their seat a horse's scull.

Note X.

The burghers hold their sports to-day.—St. XX. p. 221.

Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more espe-

cially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play*, or festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons, or *Rex Plebeiorum*, as Lesly has latinized it. The usual prize to the best shooter was a silver arrow. Such a one is preserved at Selkirk and at Peebles. At Dumfries, a silver gun was substituted, and the contention transferred to fire-arms. The ceremony, as there performed, is the subject of an excellent Scottish poem, by Mr John Mayne, entitled the Siller Gun, 1808, which surpasses the efforts of Ferguson, and comes near those of Burns.

Of James's attachment to archery, Pitscottie, the faithful, though rude recorder of the manners of that period, has given us evidence:

"In this year there came an ambassador out of England, named Lord William Howard, with a bishop with him, with many other gentlemen, to the number of threescore horse, which were all able men and waled (picked) men for all kinds of games and pastimes, shooting, louping, running, wrestling, and casting of the stone, but they were well 'sayed (essayed or tried) ere they past out of Scotland, and that by their own provocation; but ever they tint: till at last, the queen of Scotland, the king's mother, fa-

voured the English-men, because she was the king of England's sister; and therefore she took an enterprise of archery upon the English-mens hands, contrary her son the king, and any six in Scotland that he would wale, either gentlemen or yeomen, that the English-men should shoot against them, either at pricks, revers, or buts, as the Scots pleased.

"The king hearing this of his mother, was content, and gart her pawn a hundred crowns, and a tun of wine upon the English-mens hands; and he incontinent laid down as much for the Scottish-men. The field and ground was chosen in St Andrew's, and three landed men and three yeomen chosen to shoot against the English-men, to wit, David Wemyss of that ilk, David Arnott of that ilk, and Mr John Wedderburn, vicar of Dundee; the yeomen, John Thomson, in Leith, Steven Taburner, with a piper, called Alexander Bailie; they shot very near, and warred (worsted) the English-men of the enterprise, and wan the hundred crowns and the tun of wine, which made the king very merry, that his men wan the victory."—P. 147.

Note XI.

——————*Robin Hood.*—St. XXII. p. 224.

The exhibition of this renowned outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. This sport, in which kings did not disdain to be actors, was prohibited in Scotland upon the Reformation, by a statute of the 6th parliament of Queen Mary, c. 61, A. D. 1555, which ordered, under heavy penalties, that "na manner of person be chosen

Robert Hude, nor little John, Abbot of Unreason, Queen of May, nor otherwise." But, in 1561, "the rascal multitude," says John Knox, "were stirred up to make a Robin Hude, whilk enormity was of mony years left and damned by statute and act of parliament; yet would they not be forbidden." Accordingly they raised a very serious tumult, and at length made prisoners the magistrates, who endeavoured to suppress it, and would not release them till they extorted a formal promise that no one should be punished for his share of the disturbance. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the kirk, that these prophane festivities were continued down to 1592.* Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England; for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him, because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime. Much curious information on this subject may be found in the Preliminary Dissertation to the late Mr Ritson's edition of the songs respecting this memorable outlaw. The game of Robin Hood was usually acted in May; and he was associated with the morrice-dancers, on whom so much illustration has been bestowed by the commentators on Shakespeare. A very lively picture of these festivities, containing a great deal of curious information on the subject of the private life and amusements of our ancestors, was thrown

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* Book of the Universal Kirk, p. 414.

by the late ingenious Mr Strutt, into his romance entitled Queen-hoo Hall; published after his death, in 1808.

Note XII.

Indifferent as to archer wight,

The Monarch gave the arrow bright.—St. XXII. p. 225.

The Douglas of the poem is an imaginary person, a supposed uncle of the Earl of Angus. But the king's behaviour during an unexpected interview with the Laird of Kilspindie, one of the banished Douglasses, under circumstances similar to those in the text, is imitated from a real story told by Hume of Godscroft. I would have availed myself more fully of the simple and affecting circumstances of the old history, had they not been already woven into a pathetic ballad by my friend Mr Finlay.*

"His (the king's) implacability (towards the family of Douglas) did also appear in his carriage towards Archibald of Kilspindy, whom he, when he was a child, loved singularly well for his ability of body, and was wont to call him his Gray-Steill.† Archibald being banished into England, could not well comport with the humour of that nation, which he thought to be too proud, and that they had too high a conceit of

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* See Scottish Historical and Romantic Ballads. Glasgow, 1808, vol. II. p. 117.

† A champion of popular romance. See ELLIS's *Romances*, vol. III.

themselves, joined with a contempt and despising of all others. Wherefore, being wearied of that life, and remembering the king's favour of old towards him, he determined to try the king's mercifulness and clemency. So he comes into Scotland, and taking occasion of the king's hunting in the park at Stirling, he casts himself to be in his way, as he was coming home to the castle. So soon as the king saw him afar off, ere he came near, he guessed it was he, and said to one of his courtiers, yonder is my Gray Steill, Archibald of Kilspindy, if he be alive. The other answered, that it could not be he, and that he durst not come into the king's presence. The king approaching, he fell upon his knees and craved pardon, and promised from thence forward to abstain from meddling in public affairs, and to lead a quiet and private life. The king went by, without giving him any answer, and trotted a good round pace up the hill. Kilspindy followed, and, though he wore on him a secret, or shirt of mail, for his particular enemies, was as soon at the castle-gate as the king. There he sat him down upon a stone without, and entreated some of the king's servants for a cup of drink, being weary and thirsty; but they, fearing the king's displeasure, durst give him none. When the king was set at his dinner, he asked what he had done, what he had said, and whither he had gone? It was told him that he had desired a cup of drink, and had gotten none. The king reproved them very sharply for their discourtesy, and told them, that if he had not taken an oath that no Douglas should ever serve him, he would have receiv-

ed him into his service, for he had seen him some time a man of great ability. Then he sent him word to go to Leith, and expect his further pleasure. Then some kinsman of David Falconer, the canonier, that was slain at Tantallon, began to quarrel with Archibald about the matter, wherewith the king shewed himself not well pleased when he heard of it. Then he commanded him to go to France for a certain space, till he heard further from him. And so he did, and died shortly after. This gave occasion to the king of England (Henry VIII.) to blame his nephew, alleging the old saying, That a king'sface should give grace. For this Archibald, (whatsoever were Angus's or Sir George's fault) had not been principal actor of any thing, nor no counsellor or stirrer up, but only a follower of his friends, and that noways cruelly disposed."—HUME *of Godscroft*, II. 107.

Note XIII.

Prize of the wrestling match, the king
To Douglas gave a golden ring.—St. XXIII. p. 225.

The usual prize of a wrestling was a ram and a ring, but the animal would have embarrassed my story. Thus in the Cokes Tale of Gamelyn, ascribed to Chaucer:

There happed to be there beside
  Tryid a wrastiling,
And therefore there was y-setten
  A ram and als a ring.

Again the litil geste of Robin Hood:

——— By a bridge was a wrastling,
And there taryed was he,
And there was all the best yemen
Of all the west countrey.
A full fayre game there was set up,
A white bull up y-pight,
A great courser with sadle and brydle,
With gold burnished full bryght;
A payre of gloves, a red gold ringe,
A pipe of wyne good fay;
What man bereth him best I wis,
The prise shall bear away.

RITSON'S *Robin Hood*, vol. I.

NOTES TO CANTO SIXTH.

Note I.

These drew not for their fields the sword,
Like tenants of a feudal lord,
Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
Of chieftain in their leader's name;
Adventurers they.——St. III. p. 245.

The Scottish armies consisted chiefly of the nobility and barons, with their vassals, who held lands under them, for military service by themselves and their tenants. The patriarchal influence exercised by the heads of clans in the Highlands and Borders was of a different nature, and sometimes at variance with feudal principles. It flowed from the *Patria Potestas*, exercised by the chieftain as representing the original father of the whole name, and was often obeyed in contradiction to the feudal superior. James V. seems first to have introduced, in addition to the militia furnished from these sources, the service of a small number of mercenaries, who formed a

body-guard, called the Foot-Band. The satirical poet, Sir David Lindsay, (or the person who wrote the prologue to his play of the "Three Estaites,") has introduced Finlay of the Foot-Band, who, after much swaggering upon the stage, is at length put to flight by the fool, who terrifies him by means of a sheep's skull upon a pole. I have rather chosen to give them the harsh features of the mercenary soldiers of the period, than of this Scottish Thraso. These partook of the character of the Adventurous Companions of Froissart, or the Condottieri of Italy.

One of the best and liveliest traits of such manners is the last will of a leader, called Geffroy Tete Noir, who having been slightly wounded in a skirmish, his intemperance brought on a mortal disease. When he found himself dying, he summoned to his bed-side the adventurers whom he commanded, and thus addressed them:

"Fayre sirs, quod Geffray, I knowe well ye have alwayes served and honoured me as men ought to serve their soveraygne and capitayne, and I shal be the gladder if ye will agre to have to your capitayne one that is descended of my blode. Behold here Aleyne Roux, my cosyn, and Peter his brother, who are men of armes and of my blode. I require you to make Aleyne your capitayne, and to swere to him faythe, obeysaunce, love, and loyalte, here in my presence, and also to his brother: howe be it, I wyll that Aleyne have the soverayne charge. Sir, quod they, we are well content, for ye hauve ryght well chosen. There all the companyons made theym

servyant to Aleyne Roux and to Peter his brother. Whan all that was done, then Geffraye spake agayne, and sayd: Nowe, sirs, ye hauve obeyed to my pleasure, I canne you great thanke; wherefore, sirs, I wyll ye have parte of that ye have holpen to conquere. I say unto you, that in yonder chest that ye se stande yonder, therin is to the some of xxx thousande frankes,—I wyll give them accordynge to my conscyence. Wyll ye all be content to fulfil my testament; how saye ye? Sir, quod they, we be ryght well contente to fulfyl your commaundement. Thane firste, quod he, I wyll and give to the chapell of Saynt George, here in this castell, for the reparacions therof, a thousand and five hundrede franks: and I give to my lover, who hath truly served me, two thousand and five hundrede frankes: and also I give to Aleyne Roux, your newe capitayne, foure thousande frankes: also to the varlettes of my chambre I gyve fyve hundrede frankes. To mine offycers I gyve a thousand and five hundred frankes. The rest I gyve and bequeth as I shall shew you. Ye be upon a thyrtie companyons all of one sorte: ye ought to be bretherne, and all of one alyaunce, without debate, ryotte, or stryfe among you. All this that I have shewed you ye shall fynde in yonder cheste. I wyll that ye departe all the resydue equally and truelly bitwene you thyrtie. And if ye be nat thus contente, but that the devylle wyll set debate bytwene you, than beholde yonder is a strong axe, breke up the coffer, and gette it who can. To those words every man ansuered and said, Sir, and dere maister, we are and shall be all of one accorde. Sir, we have so

moche loved and douted you, that we will breke no coffer, nor breke no poynt of that ye have ordayned and commanded."
—Lord BERNER'S *Froissart*.

Note II.

Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp;
Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
The leader of a juggler band.—St. VI. p. 250.

The jongleurs, or jugglers, as we learn from the elaborate work of the late Mr Strutt, on the sports and pastimes of the people of England, used to call in the aid of various assistants, to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing; and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of Saint Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod. In Scotland, these poor creatures seem, even at a late period, to have been bonds-women to their masters, as appears from a case reported by Fountainhall. "Reid the mountebank pursues Scot of Harden and his lady, for stealing away from him a little girl, called the tumbling-lassie, that danced upon his stage: and he claimed damages, and produced a contract, whereby he bought her from her mother, for 30*l.* Scots. But we have no slaves in Scotland, and mothers cannot sell their bairns; and physicians attested, the employment of tumbling would kill her; and her joints were now grown stiff, and she declined to return; though she was at least a 'prentice, and so could not run away from her master:

yet some cited Moses's law, that if a servant shelter himself with thee, against his master's cruelty, thou shalt surely not deliver him up. The lords, *renitente cancellario*, assoilzied Harden, on the 27th of January, (1687.)"—FOUNTAINHALL'S *Decisions*, vol. I. p 439.*

The facetious qualities of the ape soon rendered him an acceptable addition to the strolling band of the jongleur. Ben Jonson, in his splenetic introduction to the comedy of "Bartholomew Fair," is at pains to inform the audience "that he has ne'er a sword and buckler man in his fair, nor a juggler, with a well-educated ape, to come over the chaine for the king of England, and back again for the prince, and sit still on his haunches for the pope and the king of Spaine."

Note III.

That stirring air which peals on high,
O'er Dermid's race our victory,
Strike it.———St. XIV. p. 262.

There are several instances, at least in tradition, of persons

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* Though less to my purpose, I cannot help noticing a circumstance respecting another of this Mr Reid's attendants, which occurred during James II's zeal for catholic proselytism, and is told by Fountainhall, with dry Scottish irony. "*January* 17th, 1687.—Reid the mountebank is received into the popish church, and one of his blackamores was persuaded to accept of baptism from the popish priests, and to turn Christian papist; which was a great trophy: he was called James, after the king and chancellor, and the apostle James."—Ibid, p. 440.

so much attached to particular tunes, as to require to hear them on their death-bed. Such an anecdote is mentioned by the late Mr Riddel of Glenriddel, in his collection of Border tunes, respecting an air called the "Dandling of the Bairns," for which a certain Gallovidian laird is said to have evinced this strong mark of partiality. It is popularly told of a famous freebooter, that he composed the tune known by the name of Macpherson's Rant while under sentence of death, and played it at the gallows-tree. Some spirited words have been adapted to it by Burns. A similar story is recounted of a Welch bard, who composed and played on his death-bed the air called *Dafydd y Garregg Wen*.

But the most curious example is given by Brantome, of a maid of honour at the court of France, entitled, Mademoiselle de Limeuil. "Durant sa maladie, dont e le trespassa, jamais elle ne cessa, ains causa tousjours; car elle estoit fort grande parleuse, brocardeuse, et très-bien et fort à propos, et très-belle avec cela. Quand l'heure de sa fin fut venue, elle fit venir a soy son valet, (ainsi que le filles de la cour en ont chacune un) qui s'appelloit Julien, et scavoit très-bien joüer du violon. 'Julien, luy dit elle, prenez vostre violon et sonnez moy tousjours jusques a ce que me voyez morte (car je m'y en vais,) la défaite des Suisses, et le mieux que vous pourrez, et quand vous serez sur le mot: 'Tout est perdu,' sonnez le par quatre ou cinq fois, le plus piteusement que vous pourrez,' ce qui fit l'autre, et elle-mesme luy aidoit de la voix, et quand ce vint 'tout est perdu,' elle le rëitera par deux fois; et se tournant

de l'autre costé du chevet, elle dit à ses compagnes: 'Tout est perdu à ce coup, et à bon escient;' et ainsi décéda. Voila une morte joyeuse et plaisante. Je tiens ce conte de deux de ses compagnes, dignes de foi, qui virent joüer ce mystere."—*Oeuvres de Brantome*, III. 507.

The tune to which this fair lady chose to make her final exit was composed on the defeat of the Swiss at Marignano. The burden is quoted by Panurge, in Rabelais, and consists of these words, imitating the jargon of the Swiss, which is a mixture of French and German:

Tout est verlore
La Tintelore,
Tout est verlore bi Got!

Note IV.

Battle of Beal' an Duine.—St. XV. p. 263.

A skirmish actually took place at a pass thus called in the Trosachs, and closed with the remarkable incident mentioned in the text. It was greatly posterior in date to the reign of James V.

"In this roughly-wooded island,* the country people secreted their wives and children, and their most valuable effects, from the rapacity of Cromwell's soldiers, during their inroad into this country, in the time of the republic. These invaders, not

* That at the eastern extremity of Loch Katrine, so often mentioned in the text.

venturing to ascend by the ladders, along the side of the lake, took a more circuitous road, through the heart of the Trosachs, the most frequented path at that time, which penetrates the wilderness about half way between Binean and the lake, by a tract called Yea-chilleach, or the Old Wife's Bog.

"In one of the defiles of this by-road, the men of the country at that time hung upon the rear of the invading enemy, and shot one of Cromwell's men, whose grave marks the scene of action, and gives name to that pass.* In revenge of this insult, the soldiers resolved to plunder the island, to violate the women, and put the children to death. With this brutal intention, one of the party, more expert than the rest, swam towards the island, to fetch the boat to his comrades, which had carried the women to their asylum, and lay moored in one of the creeks. His companions stood on the shore of the main land, in full view of all that was to pass, waiting anxiously for his return with the boat. But, just as the swimmer had got to the nearest point of the island, and was laying hold of a black rock, to get on shore, a heroine, who stood on the very point where he meant to land, hastily snatching a dagger from below her apron, with one stroke severed his head from the body. His party seeing this disaster, and relinquishing all future hope of revenge or conquest, made the best of their way out of their perilous situation. This amazon's great-grandson lives at Bridge of Turk, who, besides others, attests the anecdote."—*Sketch*

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* Beallach an duine.

of the Scenery near Callender. Stirling, 1806, p. 20. I have only to add to this account, that the heroine's name was Helen Stuart.

Note V.

And Snowdoun's knight is Scotland's king—St. XXVI. p. 283.

This discovery will probably remind the reader of the beautiful Arabian tale of *Il Bondocani.* Yet the incident is not borrowed from that elegant story, but from Scottish tradition. James V., of whom we are treating, was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons.* For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered, and frequently from the less justifiable motive of gallantry, he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises. The two excellent comic songs, entitled "The Gaberlunzie Man," and "We'll gae nae mair a roving," are said to have been founded upon the success of his amorous adventures when travelling in the disguise of a beggar. The latter is perhaps the best comic ballad in any language.

Another adventure, which had nearly cost James his life, is said to have taken place at the village of Cramond, near Edinburgh, where he had rendered his addresses acceptable to a pretty girl of the lower rank. Four or five persons, whether

relations or lovers of his mistress is uncertain, beset the disguised monarch, as he returned from his rendezvous. Naturally gallant, and an admirable master of his weapon, the king took post on the high and narrow bridge over the Almond river, and defended himself bravely with his sword. A peasant, who was threshing in a neighbouring barn, came out upon the noise, and, whether moved by compassion or by natural gallantry, took the weaker side, and laid about with his flail so effectually, as to disperse the assailants, well threshed, even according to the letter. He then conducted the king into his barn, where his guest requested a bason and towel, to remove the stains of the broil. This being procured with difficulty, James employed himself in learning what was the summit of his deliverer's earthly wishes, and found that they were bounded by the desire of possessing, in property, the farm of Braehead, upon which he laboured as a bondsman. The lands chanced to belong to the crown; and James directed him to come to the palace of Holy-Rood, and enquire for the Guidman (*i. e.* farmer) of Ballangiech, a name by which he was known in his excursions, and which answered to *Il Bondocani* of Haroun Alraschid. He presented himself accordingly, and found, with due astonishment, that he had saved his monarch's life, and that he was to be gratified with a crown-charter of the lands of Braehead, under the service of presenting an ewer, bason, and towel, for the king to wash his hands, when he shall happen to pass the Bridge of Cramond. This person was ancestor of the Howisons of Braehead, in Mid Lothian, a re-

spectable family, who continue to hold the lands (now passed into the female line) under the same tenure.

Another of James's frolics is thus narrated by Mr Campbell, from the Statistical Account. "Being once benighted when out a hunting, and separated from his attendants, he happened to enter a cottage in the midst of a moor, at the foot of the Ochil hills, near Alloa, where, unknown, he was kindly received. In order to regale their unexpected guest, the *gude-man*, (*i. e.* landlord, farmer,) desired the *gude-wife* to fetch the hen that roosted nearest the cock, which is always the plumpest, for the stranger's supper. The king, highly pleased with his night's lodging and hospitable entertainment, told mine host, at parting, that he should be glad to return his civility, and requested that the first time he came to Stirling he would call at the castle, and enquire for the *gude-man of Ballinguich*. Donaldson, the landlord, did not fail to call on the *gude-man of Ballinguich*, when his astonishment at finding that the king had been his guest afforded no small amusement to the merry monarch and his courtiers; and, to carry on the pleasantry, he was thenceforth designated by James with the title of King of the Moors, which name and designation have descended from father to son ever since, and they have continued in possession of the identical spot, the property of Mr Erskine of Mar, till very lately, when this gentleman, with reluctance, turned out the descendant and representative of the King of the Moors, on account of his majesty's invincible indolence, and great dislike to reform or innovation of any kind, although, from

the spirited example of his neighbour tenants on the same estate, he is convinced similar exertion would promote his advantage."

The author requests permission yet farther to verify the subject of his poem, by an extract from the genealogical work of Buchanan of Auchmar, upon Scottish surnames.

"This John Buchanan of Auchmar and Arnpryor was afterwards termed King of Kippen,* upon the following account. King James V., a very sociable, debonair prince, residing at Stirling, in Buchanan of Arnpryor's time, carriers were very frequently passing along the common road, being near Arnpryor's house, with necessaries for the use of the king's family, and he having some extraordinary occasion, ordered one of these carriers to leave his load at his house, and he would pay him for it; which the carrier refused to do, telling him he was the king's carrier, and his load for his majesty's use; to which Arnpryor seemed to have small regard, compelling the carrier, in the end, to leave his load; telling him, if King James was king of Scotland, he was king of Kippen, so that it was reasonable he should share with his neighbour king in some of these loads, so frequently carried that road. The carrier representing this usage, and telling the story, as Arnpryor spoke it, to some of the king's servants, it came at length to his majesty's ears, who, shortly thereafter, with a few attendants, came to visit his neighbour king, who was in the mean time at

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* A small district of Perthshire.

dinner. King James having sent a servant to demand access, was denied the same by a tall fellow with a battle-axe, who stood porter at the gate, telling, there could be no access till dinner was over. This answer not satisfying the king, he sent to demand access a second time; upon which he was desired by the porter to desist, otherwise he would find cause to repent his rudeness. His majesty finding this method would not do, desired the porter to tell his master that the good-man of Ballageigh desired to speak with the king of Kippen. The porter telling Arnpryor so much, he, in all humble manner, came and received the king, and having entertained him with much sumptuousness and jollity, became so agreeable to King James, that he allowed him to take so much of any provision he found carrying that road as he had occasion for; and, seeing he made the first visit, desired Arnpryor in a few days to return him a second to Stirling, which he performed, and continued in very much favour with the king, always thereafter being termed King of Kippen while he lived."—BUCHANAN'S *Essay upon the Family of Buchanan.* Edin. 1775, 8vo. p. 74.

The readers of Ariosto must give credit for the amiable features with which he is represented, since he is generally considered as the prototype of Zerbino, the most interesting hero of the Orlando Furioso.

Note VI.

——————— *Stirling's Tower*

Of yore the name of Snowdoun claims.—St. XXVIII. p. 286.

William of Worcester, who wrote about the middle of the fifteenth century, calls Stirling Castle Snowdoun. Sir David Lindsay bestows the same epithet upon it in his complaint of the Papingo:

> Adieu, fair Snawdoun, with thy towers high,
> Thy chaple-royal, park, and table round;
> May, June, and July, would I dwell in thee,
> Were I a man, to hear the birdis sound,
> Whilk doth agane thy royal rock rebound.

Mr Chalmers, in his late excellent edition of Sir David Lindsay's works, has refuted the chimerical derivation of Snawdoun from *snedding*, or cutting. It was probably derived from the romantic legend which connected Stirling with King Arthur, to which the mention of the Round Table gives countenance. The ring within which justs were formerly practised, in the castle park, is still called the Round Table. Snawdoun is the official title of one of the Scottish heralds, whose epithets seem in all countries to have been fantastically adopted from ancient history or romance.

It appears from the preceding note, that the real name by which James was actually distinguished in his private excursions, was the Goodman of Ballenguich; derived from a steep pass leading up to the Castle of Stirling, so called. But the

epithet would not have suited poetry, and would besides at once, and prematurely, have announced the plot to many of my countrymen, among whom the traditional stories above mentioned are still current.

FINIS.

The Author has to apologize for the inadvertent appropriation of a whole line from the tragedy of Douglas,

"I hold the first who strikes, my foe."

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